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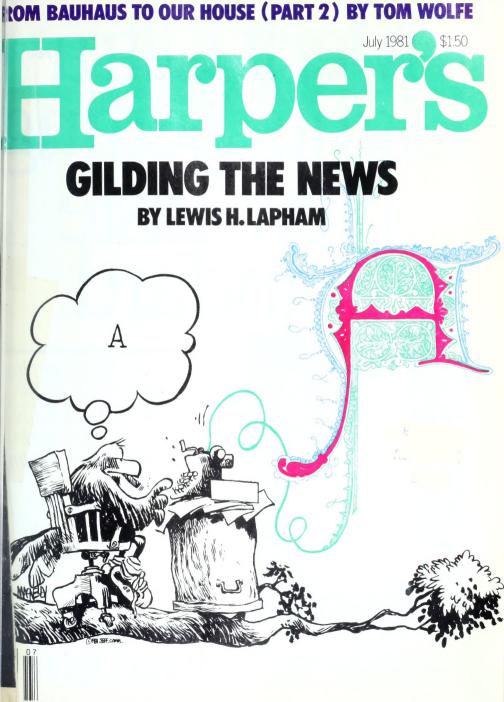
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### LETTERS

#### The price of pollution

William Tucker's article "Marketing Pollution" [Harper's, May] is one of the better brief expositions of the origins and operation of the concept. However, brevity lacks detail, and I believe Mr. Tucker underestimates some of the institutional problems that stand in the way of the use of marketable rights.

I am somewhat surprised Mr. Tucker dismisses taxes and effluent fees so readily. He seems to believe that pegging the tax rate would be an insurmountable problem. For reasons that will become clear below, I would argue that setting the tax rate would be far less controversial than attempting to set, say, an "acceptable" level of sulfur dioxide emissions for Pittsburgh for which firms would have to bid. A taxation scheme would give society a much better ex ante idea of the total cost of the control, which is all anybody seems to care about anyway. If the resultant level of pollution (which is not directly controlled under taxation) is still too high, that is too bad; society would get exactly what it was willing to pay for, and no more. Helping small businesses would be relatively easy through a tax-credit scheme.

On the other hand, setting a "proper" level of any criteria pollutant is a problem that has plagued environmental agencies from the start. Under a marketable-rights scheme, if the acceptable limit is set too low, the market price of the right could become prohibitive, particularly for poorly capitalized small

firms. Unable to compete for these rights, these firms would have to attain zero emissions either through equally unaffordable technology, or more likely, through bankruptcy.

Mr. Tucker correctly points ou the need to overhaul EPA's bureau cracy if such proposals are to suc ceed. During my tenure with the agency's office of toxic substances, found many middle-level bureaucratopposing such measures because i would take decisions about who would do what and when out of thei hands. It is hard to be a decision maker when you make no decision

However, senior bureaucrats can be replaced, so solving the interna EPA problem is the easy part. It will be much more difficult to convince Congress that it, too, must not inter fere in such markets if they are to operate effectively.

Mr. Tucker also seems to believe that industry would enjoy such as economic rationalization of pollution. My experience in attempting to establish a system of marketable rights for chlorofluorocarbon emis sions showed that such is not the case. One reason for firms' opposi tion is simply that most companie have become accustomed to the pres ent system. More important, in dustry is opposed because it know marketable rights will work. Unde the present system, a determined firm can tie the issue up in court for tel years, incurring relatively minor le gal expenses. Taxes or permits may reduce the effectiveness of this op tion, leading many firms to oppos such measures.

More important, and almost totallignored by economists, is the issu

the massive redistribution of ealth that could result from pollunarights markets. EPA's study of lorofluorocarbon regulation showed at a marketable-permit system ould save over 50 percent in capital sts compared to mandatory consls. However, the transfer payments sulting from the operation of the stem would be ten times the amount the capital cost.

My point is this: implementation an effective marketable-rights sysm for pollution control involves ore than a reform of environmenlism. It also requires reform of ingressional and industry attitudes ward regulation. Rather than elimating regulation, industry and Coness must be ready to set acceptable vels once and for all, and abandon e question to the anarchy of what affectionately called the "free" arket. If any party reserves the ght to circumvent the market mechnism, distortions arise, and any alcative efficiency is lost.

JAMES W. HUCHES Staff Economist, Office of Toxic Substances, EPA, 1978–1980 Ann Arbor, Mich.

I enjoyed William Tucker's arcle "Marketing Pollution." Speakng for myself and not the EPA, owever, I would like to update the elationships between and current tatus of the Bubble Policy, Emision Reduction Banking, and other ypes of Controlled Trading [of polution rights] that use the profit moive to cut the costs, rigidity, and inrusiveness of air pollution control.

The Bubble and related steps are working. Companies are investing scarce capital to take advantage of the cost-saving opportunities they create; over seventy bubbles averaging \$2 million savings each are being developed; and it is not unreasonable to expect savings of \$1 billion by December.

Controlled Trading is rapidly evolving and will produce geometrically increasing benefits as word filters down to the firm level.

Making Controlled Trading work has forced the agency to rethink the way it manages air quality and to move toward more decentralized market-based approaches.

Controlled Trading can make extra pollution control a valuable commodity rather than a nonproductive investment.

Controlled Trading represents an important institutional shift from the philosophy that pollution should trigger vengeance to an emphasis on cost-effective emissions reductions, regardless of past history.

Controlled Trading confirms that many problems with the Clean Air Act result from restrictive regulatory interpretations rather than from the statute, and can be overcome administratively with a little imagination.

Controlled Trading is not a panacea. But to the extent it can sharply reduce costs, decentralize decision-making, and provide industry much more flexibility to meet (and better ability to plan to meet) public health goals, it represents a "middle ground" that polarized interest groups can support.

It's important that Controlled Trading become a central issue in the coming reauthorization debate. Failure to focus on the benefits CT is already producing may result in changes that inadvertently discourage or wipe out its potential to benefit both the economy and the environment.

MICHAEL H. LEVIN Chief, Regulatory Reform Staff United States Environmental Protection Agency Washington, D.C.

William Tucker's presentation of "marketable rights" is vastly oversimplified. "Marketable rights" is not, as Mr. Tucker suggests, a panacea for the problems of the Clean Air Act. Tucker's presentation of the history and problems of the legislation is essentially tenable, but he chose to slur some very fine environmental groups. Environmental problems may not ultimately be dis-

tilled into problems of simple economics. Quite the contrary: most environmental problems are intimately tied to aesthetic considerations that fortunately have yet to be price-tagged.

While it is tempting to invoke the miracle of the free market and assume that "marketable rights" will make pollution control self-regulatory, this is simply not the case. It seems likely that a polluter might never relinquish pollution rights once they were acquired. This would mean that new industry would have to meet the zero-pollution standard that Mr. Tucker claims is unrealistic. The net result of "marketable rights" might well be fantastically expensive pollution "rights," and a situation for industry similar to the present, but with pollution privileges for a few and a proportionately heavier burden for the rest.

Nor is the "marketable-rights" system guaranteed to alleviate bureaucratic or legal wrangling. Basin size and permissible levels will be crucial to the consequences of a pollution-market system. Industries will feel cheated by bureaucratic decisions and see economic advantage in challenging the decision-making process.

Finally, the "marketable-rights" system is environmentally unsound. Acceptable average emissions in a basin do not ensure acceptable air quality throughout the basin. A lone industry in a large basin might purchase all the rights for the basin and escape control, thus creating substandard air quality near the source. Clearly, this type of system begs the issue of true environmental protection.

Environmental protection is a complex and changing issue in a complex and changing society. Those who believe that simple regulation or deregulation can provide satisfactory environmental quality are seriously mistaken. Realistic environmental protection requires perseverance, dedication, and flexibility, qualities seldom, if ever, found together in either government or industry. Ultimately what is needed is a new breed of environmental professionals, professionals committed to environmental

ronmental quality and able to work realistically with industry, able to understand and analyze complex issues spanning multiple disciplines, and able to initiate and facilitate meaningful public forums on environmental problems.

For the future, we may hope for the emergence of competent environmental professionals, an event crucial to the efficient pursuit of environmental quality, because within the sphere of human influence the environment will never be self-regulatory.

LEE HANNAH
Dept. of Environmental
Science and Engineering
University of California
Los Angeles, Calif.

WILLIAM TUCKER REPLIES:

Mr. Hannah suggests an objection often mentioned, that one industry will have the impulse to buy up all the pollution rights for a region and thus force competitors out of business. Pollution rights could thus be turned into an anti-competitive tool. After talking with several officials at the EPA, I am not seriously concerned that this could happen. An industry's competitors are rarely clustered around it in the same city or the same region. They are in other states, and sometimes all over the country. The company would therefore just be wasting its money. It would be forcing out of business neighboring industries making completely different products.

Mr. Hannah raises the problem of ambient standards-conditions immediately around a plant-as opposed to average air quality for the region. This might be a problem, but I doubt if it is reason for abandoning the marketable-rights idea. Because the marketable-rights system makes any pollution cost money, it is always going to be advantageous for firms to make some clean-up efforts. It is known, for example, that washing coal before burning it can reduce sulfur emissions by as much as 50 percent. But few firms exercise this cheap option because it does not help in meeting the 80-90 percent reductions required by current regulation. If one giant smelter or coal-burning plant cannot find it economical to make even marginal clean-up efforts under marketable rights, then it is unlikely that present regulatory requirements can do anything other than shut the plant down.

Both Mr. Hughes and Mr. Hannah raise the objection that firms will not act rationally, even when it is to their economic advantage. I doubt if this could persist in the long run. More likely, it will just take time for businesses to adjust to the new system. Mr. Hughes's point, however, that the total cost of the pollution rights could become astronomical on original sale, may be valid. Maryland is now adopting a marketable-rights system and is finding that it produces precisely this result. It is therefore initially distributing the rights free, and allowing trading to take place subsequently. Another option would be to distribute about 75 percent of the rights free, and take bidding only on the remaining 25 percent.

Mr. Hannah suggests one final objection often made, that marketable rights or pollution taxes will mean that "only the rich can pollute," and that money will somehow contravene the public's desire for a clean environment. It can only be pointed out again that under the present system, rich and poor alike are allowed to pollute for free. Economic incentives are only a way of meeting the goals of current regulation more efficiently.

As for Mr. Hannah's "new breed of environmental professionals." I suspect they are the same people Mr. Hughes describes as the "bureaucrats opposed to such measures because it would take decisions... out of their hands." To say that the economy cannot regulate environmental clean-up itself, given the proper incentives, is to say that it can't adjust itself to any consumer demand or scarce resource.

Viva Mexico

Matthew Stevenson's "The Capital of Underdevelopment" [Harper's, May] was excellent. I read it while

flying home on Mexicana Airlin after a visit to the city, and all describes is right on target.

However, he refers unclearly a "revolution" at least six times. Reolution by whom? For what? To Benito Juarez revolution (the or real one) died as soon as the chur (which, incidentally, Stevenson metions only once) was permitted return to its original power.

The priesthood does not pract open-heart surgery as the Aztecs d on their infamous pyramids, w pretty virgin boys and girls. Insteathey lobotomize these young min and fill them with medieval nonsen These children and adolescents th accept that their only purpose in l is to become reproductive machin

The two men whom Stevens talked with spoke of many things (a cabbages and kings, etc.) but not word about this church-directed a imalistic behavior. These people (and the people of India) are vitims of a double-jointed curse: the big foot of the church on the narrof their necks, which is lifted or for the purpose of allowing them reproduce themselves. There is choice of hope or despair.

WILLIAM J. AXELRO San Diego, Cal

Matthew Stevenson made a sm big erratum in his description why I bought (not owned) a lit piece of land in the valley of M relos last year. This is not becau I am afraid of a revolution but h cause the city—the smog, the traffithe noise—scares me. A correctic small as it is, would be in orde, for my sake if not for Mr. Steveson's. His statement creates compared the political attitude it presupposes.

HELEN ESCOBED
Mexico City, Mexico

I cannot share Matthew Steveson's optimistic view of Mexico Caror any other Latin American Tropolis. He seems to believe that t "freedom" of Latin America—fredom to starve and to be unemploy—is preferable to the "nonfreedom of Cuba and Czechoslovakia. I can accept this, any more than I can a

pt the urban degradation of many

It would be different if the Latin merican governments were activeengaged in trying to improve their cieties. They most assuredly are it! Most regimes in Latin Amera are proceeding with the sale of tal resources to foreign (mostly S.) companies at a pittance while eir exploding populations must re at the very edge of subsistence. is easy for someone like Stevenn, coming from affluence, to conmn "totalitarianism," for totalitarnism condemns affluence. To a atin American peasant or worker, talitarianism might just mean mething to eat and a job at any

The article illustrated the many oblems of the third world's cities, and presented them in the context the agricultural crisis. In this ense, Stevenson has done us a favor.

FRANK W. GOHEEN
Camas. Wash.

MATTHEW STEVENSON REPLIES:

I fail to see the connection between totalitarian governments and decent standards of living. Maybe China is the exception, but were governments such as those of the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, or Cambodia better able to provide basic goods for their populations, there would probably be less need for barbed wire around their borders or concentration camps in which to herd dissidents.

Granted, Mexico, like many other societies—including our own—has the terrible problem of trying to feed its people. But to add to this burden the jackboots of a tyrant and his attendant ideologies would do nothing to relieve the siege of overpopulation, agricultural failures, and water scarcity—among other problems that the country faces—unless, in Pol Pot style, somebody wanted to march the entire population of Mexico City into the countryside, a fate I wish on no one.

From what I saw in the city Mexico needs the creative energies of a free society. By this I mean not the economic theories of Milton Friedman but rather the democratic applications of people such as Helen Escobedo, Thus my point about the contested property outside the city was not that Helen Escobedo has a laager mentality and that she is ready to skip town at the first sign of discontent. It was to show that the revolutionary conditions in the city-overpopulation, smog, traffic of apocalyptic proportionsmake it difficult for citizens to persevere with the labors of democracy. But if my optimism about the city's future has foundation, it rests, in part, on the energy of people such as Helen Escobedo, who, far from exuding a fear of the future, seem to embrace it. If people like her are driven into exile, whatever the reasons, the city's chances for progress diminish.

HARPER'S/JULY 1981

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## THE FORGOTTEN WAR

To arm the Afghans

by Nicholas Bethe

FGHANISTAN'S Jaji district, part of Paktia province on the Pakistan border, thirty miles west of the Khyber Pass, teems with the debris of war and the aftermath of foreign invasion—burned crops and bombed livestock. In this mountainous southern

Lord Bethell is the author of The Last Secret and The Palestine Triangle, among other books, and a member of the European Pararea of the country there is no Soviet occupation, just two Afghan army garrisons with a few Soviet advisers in each, surrounded with minefields to keep out the resistance fighters (mujahedin) and to keep in the conscript Afghan soldiers, who are liable to change sides and join them. The steep, stony hills are littered with the pretty, green, butterfly-shaped objects that flutter down like toy propellers from Soviet aircraft. They

look tempting, but they give off nauseating chemical smell, and if y pick one up you lose a hand.

Although they are one of tourses of the Jaji valleys, at lesthey can quite easily be made harless—by throwing a stone from few yards away. The real curse the Soviet helicopter gunships. The come sometimes to reprovision to garrisons and relieve the people side them, sometimes to nunish to



population. They hover overl and the villagers run for cover fieldmice from a hawk, then they et any sign of civilization, any ding, anything alive or growing, the Soviets' policy, if they find difficult to occupy an area, to ch its earth and starve its peoforcing them into the cities, they control, where they can egistered and corraled, and then scripted or sent to the Soviet on for reeducation.

he helicopters are the main reawhy over 10 percent of the han population-1.851.714 at the count-have fled across the Paan border and are being looked r by the United Nations (largely American and west European exse) in refugee camps near the of Peshawar, which is a prinal supply point for mujahedin ups. They have lost their homes land, but at least they are safe. men can fight knowing that their es and children are being taken e of. The same cannot be said of villagers in Jaji district across border, many of whom are themes refugees from the occupied as. They live on what little can grown, on U.N. rations bought on Pakistan black market and smugd across the border, as hostages ject to the capricious vengeance the helicopters.

Nowadays the *mujahedin* fire at telicopter only from behind good ver, good enough to protect them m its terrible power. If they reveal it whereabouts, they get a rocketud of high explosive, napalm, or ison gas. Their antiaircraft maine guns are too cumbersome and trusive to use and anyway the dlets bounce like peas off the helipters' titanium-strengthened hulls. Metallurgy is one of the few areas are the Soviet Union leads the nited States in science.)

Three generations of technical ogress separate the two sides' arrory. The invaders have guided issiles, the Afghans little more can the .303 Enfields issued to their randfathers by the British Raj. Precisely 100 years ago the Afghans orsted British invaders in precisely the same area.) The old Enfield,

properly nursed and oiled, can still serve a purpose. It is a good, accurate weapon for the Afghan, who likes to lie in wait, to hide behind a rock and take slow, careful aim at an enemy patrolling on foot. But it is too heavy. It impedes a guerrilla fighter's mobility. And in Afghanistan today the Russians do not patrol on foot.

HE MUJAHEDIN of Jaji district have little ammunition, even for these old rifles. There are 15,000 fighters, but arms for only 2,000. And they have to pay two or three dollars apiece for rifle rounds made individually by craftsmen in small Pakistani workshops. Some Afghans refuse these "forgeries," since a badly made round can ruin a rifle barrel forever. There are few things an Afghan fears more than the ruination of his rifle.

In the mujahedin's view there is one answer to the problem, a simple one. And that is a generous supply of surface-to-air missiles. To the Afghan guerrilla it seems axiomatic that these weapons—Soviet Sam 7's, British "Blowpipes," or the American "Red Eye"—are capable of transforming the war. They are light and simple to operate. Syrian infantrymen with only a few hours' training used them to shoot down Israeli fighters during the 1973 war. They are light to carry and cheap to buy.

Any bargain-basement arms dealer in New York or London can provide a Sam 7 rocket launcher for \$7,000, with \$2,000 for each missile, capable of destroying \$9 million worth of helicopter. The heat-seeking "Red Eye" is even easier to operate. Former defense intelligence agency director Daniel Graham says, "You take the cap off and point it in the general direction of the enemy aircraft. The machine does the rest. You don't even have to pull the trigger. You have to be a very clever soldier to miss."

General Graham was speaking in Washington in February, at a meeting where Jaji district's guerrilla commander, Hakim Aryobi, and his political leader, Sayed Ahmad Gailani, head of the National Islamic Front for Afghanistan (NIFA), were introduced to senators and congressmen. The two Afghans heard him with keen anticipation, but with a certain anger, since it seems incredible to them that the West still withholds the weapons that could drive the hated gunships out of Afghan valleys. No helicopter, they believe, would venture into guerrilla-held territory once it was known that there were surface-to-air missiles in guerrilla hands. The valleys would become truly free and the villagers could return to a relatively normal life, harvesting crops and grazing livestock. The refugee flood would be stemmed. The "Red Eye" seems the answer to Afghan prayers.

Gailani's NIFA group is based among the Pushtu-speaking tribes of southern Afghanistan and across the border. He is the hereditary leader of the Oaderi sect of Sunni Islam, which has several million followers inside the country, so it was natural for him to be chosen by them to lead the armed struggle (jihad) against the Soviet invader. Unlike his main rival, Golbuddin Hekmatyar, whose Islamic fundamentalism makes Avatollah Khomeini's seem liberal by comparison, he is tolerant of other faiths and not anti-Western. During his visit to Washington he invited the United States to do what the Soviet Union always does in similar circumstances-Angola, Zimbabwe, and El Salvador, for instance-to give the resistance fighters the arms that they need to fight a "war of national liberation."

"The entire Soviet bloc helped the Vietcong and it took them years to get to our stage," he said. "And Vietnam is far less important strategically than Afghanistan today. If aid comes, the Afghans will fight for a hundred years. But if we do not get arms, the jihad will fail and sooner or later people will accept any ideology rather than see their children killed in front of their eyes. If this happens and communism takes root, Soviet forces will be within 300 miles of the Straits of Hormuz, the entrance to the Gulf. They will be only 300 miles away from a stranglehold on the West's main oil supplies. Pakistan will be destabilized and the Soviet Union will probably be able to obtain port facilities in the warm water of the Indian Ocean, which has always been their aim. The Afghans will be persuaded to fight as Soviet mercenaries, as the Cubans do now, only more vigorously, since fighting is our traditional way."

The congressmen seemed impressed by Gailani's remarks. At a lunch in the Senate there was talk of "getting a bill up front" to provide funds for the mujahedin immediately, and resolutions have subsequently been tabled in both houses. Rep. Douglas Bereuter (Rep.-Neb.) said, "I ask the CIA about Afghanistan and all I get is a nod and a wink and a nudge. I'd like to know what the U.S. is doing."

Rep. Robert Dornan (Rep.-Calif.) saw the issue, quite apart from its strategic implications, as the new president's first great human rights challenge: "Every sin that the United States committed or was alleged to have committed in Vietnam, the Soviet forces have committed hundreds of times over in Afghanistan. I was never a defender of Lieutenant Calley. I thought he should have been court-martialed and he got off lightly. But there are Soviet officers in Afghanistan committing a 'My Lai' almost every day."

◀ HE STATE DEPARTMENT and other Western foreign offices are quick to point out that things are never quite that simple. It is not publicly known to what extent, if at all, the West already helps the jihad. A White House spokesman recently refused to comment on this, adding, "This is the position we take on all problems that could involve covert activity. If you deny one operation, you have to deny all of them. So we neither confirm nor deny." British foreign secretary Lord Carrington says, "The arms are getting through to the guerrillas and I think we'd better leave it at that." Only President Sadat proudly proclaims that he helps the mujahedin and will continue to do so. His Western allies remain cov.

The arguments for inactivity can seem strong. The Soviets, it is pointed out, made a monumental miscalculation by invading Afghanistan. They thought that a few days would suffice to return the country to its normal, subservient, pro-Soviet position. Instead, they find themselves lumbered with an unpleasant guerrilla war on their borders and, for the first time in recent memory, with the unflagging opposition of the entire third world. On January 15. 1980, they lost the U.N. vote on the issue by 104 votes to 18 and by November 20 the number of votes against them had risen to 111. This has almost never happened before. Usually the Soviets and the third world vote together. Their alliance with resurgent Islam, based on antiimperialism and anti-Zionism, is shattered.

These important diplomatic gains, it is said, would be put at risk if the West involved itself in Afghanistan militarily, or at least if it were known to be so involved. The Soviet Union would be able to exploit any such clear link by labeling the Western governments imperialist warmongers and the mujahedin their puppets. Soviet propaganda would play down the quarrel with the third world and play up the quarrel with the United States. Afghanistan would become just one more bone of contention between the two superpowers.

Furthermore, the idea of intervention raises a serious question: should it be covert or overt? If it is to be the latter, as many in Congress would like, the decision must be made by other countries too, especially Pakistan, the only possible through route to the fighting area. Pakistan would have to face the consequences of becoming the West's accomplice in an anti-Soviet crusade. Already Pakistan border posts have been bombed by Soviet aircraft. President Zia ul-Haq would never agree to expose his country to further retaliation, at least not as matters stand now.

President Zia is in difficulty. He hanged his predecessor, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, and briefly restored the oldfashioned Islamic customs of amputation and public flogging. A few weeks ago he took away the inpendence of the judiciary, afterjackers of a Pakistani aircraft for him into the humiliation of releas some of his most fervent polit opponents from prison. He has alated not only Western liberal opion but also many in his own cctry. Several regions, it is believare close to rebellion. Is this man whom the West is now suppoto recruit to keep the Holy Warbusiness?

The jihad, it is true, helps Pa stan's precarious stability. It is popular Islamic cause and a unify force at home as well as abroad. the Afghan refugees in the north a heavy burden for such a p country, only partly relieved by West through the United Natio and the quarrels of the various mi hedin groups add significantly to internal strife bedeviling the count The Pakistan authorities present show favor not to the moder Gailani group but to Gulbud Hikmatyar, who is as anti-West as he is anti-Soviet. Is the Uni States now expected to provide ar through Pakistan, for a group t receives money from Libya's Qu dhafi and holds up the Iranian revo tion to its compatriots as an examfor the future?

HE RESISTANCE groups are disarray-or at least that how it seems to Western servers. Gulbuddin rejel Gailani as a Western puppet, an a tocrat, and an Islamic backslid Gailani sees Gulbuddin as a fana without political background or si port, who would take Afghanish back to the dark ages. It seems surd that with their country oc pied and in ruins, the mujahedin sl cannot bury their differences a concentrate on fighting the great enemy. Such disunity adds to Western governments' problems, fc ing them not only to decide the pin ciple of support for the jihad also to make value judgments tween this or that group.

Finally, there is the question of the United States' national interand political will. What popular

tivation would Americans have an alliance with unknown Islamic oups fighting a crusade on the rders of China, Russia, and Patan? The memories of Vietnam. ere the United States was sucked o war after deciding merely to only arms and to train a few ofers, are still vivid. And can these all groups of irregular soldiers illy survive against the might of superpower, especially one totally thout moral restraint and ready to any method to suppress people occupied areas, with no journalists television cameras there to portray grim and gory details?

These are some of the arguments ed to dull Congress's ardor for ttle. Afghanistan is a lost cause, is said. It has always been in the viet Union's sphere of influence d now it has been taken over enely. Well, so be it. America has ready too many overseas commitents, and if it must contemplate illitary adventure, let this be in eas closer to home like El Salvar. Do we really have to send surce-to-air missiles to the other side the world? Don't we have enough oblems of our own?

Such feelings of self-doubt, which recent years have created policies defeatism and inactivity, encourge the worldwide perception that e United States, while its main lversary embarks on a period of tive and successful expansion, is ontent to decline as a power. And hile this has little effect on firm lies such as Britain, which would ever desert the Western alliance, it evitably discourages third-world ountries from throwing in their lot ith the superpower that seems to ick the will either to assist its iends when they are in trouble or pursue its own obvious global iterests.

China is particularly concerned bout the Afghan war. According to ne congressman its ambassador in Vashington has lately been abusing he Soviet Union "like a member of he John Birch Society." China proides the mujahedin, by devious neans, with much of their weaponry, specially its own ten-shot copy of he Kalashnikov machine riffe, which

is very popular because it can use ammunition captured from the other side. (Mr. Gailani says, "Our most generous supplier is the Soviet army itself.") Its future attitude to the superpower battle will be influenced by American policies on Afghanistan.

Last year the United States had better reason to stand aloof. The mujahedin seemed little more than a thorn that the occupying army would soon be able to pluck from its flesh and destroy. And a few weeks after the invasion the hostage crisis in neighboring Iran stole the American people's attention. But now the hostages are home and the mujahedin are fighting more effectively than ever. The resilience and aggression of the Afghan warrior, something that the British came to understand the hard way a century ago, is at last being appreciated by American analysts on the Pakistan side of the border as well as, more personally, by Russian soldiers to the north.

Russian soldiers, confined day and night in barracks in a hostile land. are becoming "stir crazy" and discipline is beginning to suffer. According to recent accounts, too numerous to be dismissed as travelers' tales, they loot shops and sell military equipment for money to relieve their boredom. A special section of Kabul's Pul-e-Charki prison has been set aside for those who are caught. A thriving black market provides hashish and soft pornography, while their traditional recreation-alcohol -is furnished in various mixtures of eau de cologne, antifreeze, brake fluid, aircraft de-icing fluid, and an ingenious distillation of shoe polish toasted on slices of black bread.

Far from allowing themselves to be rounded up, the *mujahedin* have confined Soviet forces indoors or inside armored vehicles, in effect rounding them up themselves, putting the jailers behind bars. In this way, flying in the face of most expectations, they have proved themselves on the cruel battlefield of guerrilla warfare. But they are still an untrained and divided collection of diverse groups, using .303 rifles against missiles, dependent on Pakistan for bases and on rich Islamic nations for equipment. Unlike other

successful guerrilla movements of recent memory, they have little or no support from the great powers.

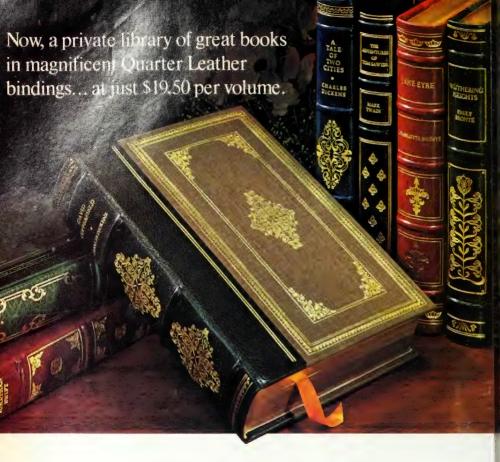
HETHER the West can ever help them openly must depend, in the words of Robert Neumann, former U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan, on providing "credible assurances of support" for General Zia's Pakistan government, since Pakistan is the only possible conduit. This has been one of the matters discussed during intense diplomatic negotiation these past weeks, most recently during Foreign Minister Aqa Shahi's visit to Washington on April 20. But, strangely, while these talks continue, the matter is debated hardly at all in public, either in Congress or in the press.

Afghanistan is the forgotten war, but it remains by far the most important military conflict of the day in terms of the Soviet-American strategic balance. It is the only instance since the Second World War where the Soviet army has been engaged in protracted combat, and it is the only land where murder and expulsion to the point of genocide are being carried out by a foreign invading army.

So it is hard to understand why, until now, the Western world has been content to watch the battle like a spectator in a bullring, from time to time cheering on the tortured animal, but from a distance, as if the matter were of no concern to the onlookers and as if intervention were in any case useless, since the bull is inevitably doomed to die in the end.

The mujahedin have proved the improbable. The bull can survive against the matadors. The United States and its allies can now, with their help, persuade the Soviet government to discuss a nonaligned Afghanistan and the withdrawal of all foreign troops. Such an "impossible" result would be Russia's first military defeat in recent history, a blow to its superpower prestige of grandiose—almost Vietnamese—proportions.

HARPER'S/JULY 1981



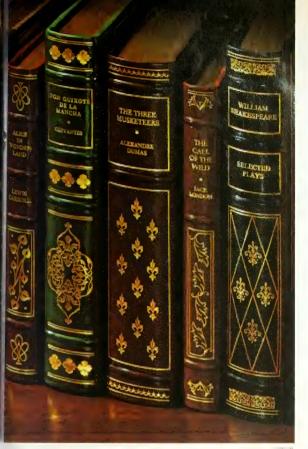
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## THE GREAT BLACK HOPE

Richard II of Tanzania

by Ken Adelma

T WAS ALTOGETHER fitting that the Tanzanian president. Julius Nverere, was the first African leader welcomed to the Carter White House and there hailed as "a senior statesman, a scholar, a philosopher, a great writer" by Jimmy Carter. The two deeply religious presidents then became pen pals by exchanging private, handwritten letters. But Carter's hyperbole was not unique. The ever staid World Bank president, Robert S. McNamara, called Tanzania his favorite African state, and Governor Jerry Brown literally sat at Nverere's knee to learn the mysteries of the continent from the master.

Going on two decades in office, Nyerere has been the great black

Ken Adelman lived in Africa from 1972 to 1975 and recently published African Realities (Crane-Russak). He is now with the Strategic Studies Center of SRI International.

hope of academicians as well as of politicians. Scholars have flocked to the capital city of Dar es Salaam and come away breathless. To give one of scores of possible examples: John Hatch's eleventh book on Africa heralds Nyerere as ranking high "in the anti-imperialist honors," a "philosopher-king" wedded to "economic development" with a "passionate devotion to social justice," a "man of peace" and an "example of puritanism" who has a "profound effect throughout Africa," Rare is a scholar who would indulge in such hagiography when analyzing an American leader, but common have they been for the Tanzanian leader. Adoration of Nyerere fills books on Africa, and Nverere's own words and thoughts have molded an entire generation of Africanists. To the world at large, he is commonly called "the conscience of Africa." To his people at home, he is simply called *Mwalimu*, which is Swahili for "teacher."

In his youth, Mwalimu translate Julius Caesar and The Merchant Venice into Swahili. Regrettably, In never translated Richard II, for Ny rere remarkably resembles Richard Both are deeply sensitive, keenly it telligent, and wonderfully eloque speakers in "verse royal." Both a adept poets—although Nyerere 1 fuses to publish most of his ov works—and "sweet, lovely roses" individuals. But both of them e hibit royal incompetence as rulers

William Hazlitt wrote that "th part of Richard himself gives chil interest to the play." Similarly, the part of Nyerere gives chief intere to the country. Without him Ta zania would be largely ignored as medium-sized (by African standard though it is larger than Texas medium-populated (17 million), fa off country devoid of important mierals and notable chiefly for its awfl poverty. But Mwalimu someho transforms the surrounding squal into the building blocks of "a ne society on the basis of a utopia socialist theory that echoes Rou seau's romantic primitivism," quote one scholar writing in 1979

In Tanzania this primitivism surge to the surface while, at least for visitor, the romanticism resides heath. I found the country shabb. People must line up for basic necesities such as bread and milk, and even then they face shortages fitems such as soap, cooking o, matches, and beer. Lights blink a and off, filth amasses on street coners, and the noise of Dar make Bangkok seem pastoral.



o one ever goes to Dar mistaking it for the Club Med. People flock there to pay homage to Mwalimu. th his sparkling eyes and humble le of living (annual salary: ,000). He serves orange juice on e verandah of his modest beach use, spurning the palatial colonialilt residence. Many come solely hear cries for justice and dignity om Mwalimu, the continent's most passioned and effective antagonist racism. He has made Dar into a nd of heaven for liberation. The rganization of African Unity's )AU) "liberation committee" has headquarters there, and all the rious groups fighting white rule aintain offices in Dar. Not surprisgly, Nyerere is chairman of the contline States-those facing whiteled Rhodesia (now black-ruled mbabwe). Namibia, and South frica-even though Tanzania has common borders with any of the ree. Mwalimu pushes hard to esblish a Human Rights Commission Africa.

He relentlessly advocates one-man, ac-vote throughout southern Africa, though Mwalimu has always run nopposed at home and has constently racked up over 90 percent f the popular vote. Elections were eld in October 1980, but were reeted with a collective yawn.

Mwalimu's passion for human ghts is outlined in his book Freeom and Unity. He writes that "the hole of the new modern educational vstem must...be directed towards aculcating" basic principles; these re revealed by Mwalimu. "No adocacy of opposition to these princiles can be allowed." None is. Alhough human rights in Tanzania ave recently improved, by no acount do they jibe with Nyerere's perorations on liberty for all. Even he gingerly State Department, in a 979 report, pointed out Nyerere's sypocrisy as a "vocal advocate for tuman rights abroad" and as ruler of a state which "tends to ignore, or it best to justify ... violations of numan rights" at home, whose "government ideology subordinates the rights of the individual to the needs of the state." This and subsequent



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reports run through a list of elements of freedom and find Tanzania wanting in nearly all. It "restrains political debate." moves peasants by force, has "widespread" corruption, owns and controls all media, bans opposition groups, controls all unions, and denies the right to strike. Amnesty International delves into past instances, which the other groups merely mention, of torture "on the legs, ankles and genital organs" carried out by Tanzanian officials, although such gruesome activities seem to have been discontinued. Leading Chama Cha Maninduzi members who criticized Mwalimu's policies in May 1979 wound up in jail without trial. Some reports tell of 1,000 others detained for protesting of one sort or another. They languish in prisons that the State Department calls "seriously overcrowded" and that often have inadequate facilities.

EW VISITORS dare jeopardize their welcome by asking Mwalimu about Tanzania's political prisoners. But they needn't worry. He takes no offense, Sure, there might be some "political detainees," he responded to a questioner in Washington four years ago, but that's "depending upon your definition." There are "a few politicians or individuals who are locked up somewhere who are opposed to the system." How many? Well, it's "silly" to claim 3.000 as some people do. It's more like "four on the mainland," or, at another point, Mwalimu said, "We have about seventeen?

four-to-seventeen stretches veracity. When I was there in early 1979, Tanzania had more political prisoners than South Africa, according to Los Angeles Times correspondent David Lamb, something recent events have confirmed. In April 1979, Mwalimu eased his overpopulated jails by releasing 6,396 prisoners on a national holiday. Spring cleaning was repeated a year later with 4,436 let go, but only those "disabled, aged or sick prisoners who had not been convicted of theft or sabotage of the national economy," the home office stated.

Who were these prisoners? When asked, officials reply only that their release shows Mwalimu's love of justice. But officials are becoming more frank about other alleged abuses, or at least they were to me. Top ministers owned up to "certain excesses" in the *ujamaa* settlements program, which Mwalimu launched in 1967. But a few years later only 100,000 villagers had voluntarily joined the kibbutzlike communities. If the people's consciousness did not move the 14 million others, the state would.

And it did. Villagers were forced and, where needed, pushed by the army and roving bands of militiamen-off their traditional lands by government edict. Many who refused to budge had their buts burned or bulldozed. Even the state-controlled press took pity on the thousands "left to fend for themselves under conditions in which even the most ardent would find it difficult to cope." Some victims were not docile: a farmer whose land was nationalized for an uiamaa slaughtered the regional commissioner responsible and became the local hero for doing so.

But these are shrouded instances that have not blemished Nyerere's reputation for championing justice. Personally, however, he is most concerned with championing socialism. On this there is no ambiguity or hypocrisy. If underdeveloped countries "do not choose socialism, they will continue in a state of weakness, they will be maltreated, oppressed, exploited, and will never realize true independence," Mwalimu said. "We're fighting against capitalism."

VER THE PAST few decades, Nyerere has carefully designed Tanzania's industry for "the meeting of people's needs, not the making of profits." He has done quite well on the latter. Nearly half the 330 companies he nationalized, in everything from clothing to cloves, were bankrupt by 1975. Almost a third of those that are left lose money despite a monopoly of their respective markets; twenty-four of them reported a combined cumulative loss of \$20 million.

Mwalimu realizes the problem but

for once seems baffled by it. "T carried out the textbook procedur for raising capital," he once pleade But what reasonable textbook reco mends raising capital by prohibiti all payments of dividends (effectisince 1976), or by taxing people w earn more than \$30,000 yearly the 95 percent bracket? Since wag are set and workers are prohibit. from striking, there is little incentito work hard. A seminar of the Ta zanian Investment Bank in Novel ber 1979 found productivity p worker had dropped 50 percent ov the past decade. Nor are profession calibrated "for the making of proits." In 1979 Tanzania had only or physician per 19,000 people. Non theless, many doctors began leaving for business or going overseas who the last of the private clinics are dispensaries was nationalized in Ju-1979. Few physicians wish to jo the government health service charities with such skimpy salarie The attorney general recently to lawyers that they face the same fat No more private practice, and it a ready takes two years to get a call

heard in court. No matter. To Mwalimu, industr and the professions are secondar since their success will sprout fro the fruits of agriculture. Tanzan has bountiful land, 60 percent ar ble, and was self-sufficient in foo production in 1967. Mwalimu ha been highly successful with his uit maa settlements-90 percent of th population now lives in 8,000 c them-but the same cannot be sail for the settlements themselves. In on decade. Tanzania turned from a ne maize exporter to a large maize in porter: according to an FAO repor villagers would produce less than third of the 376,000 tons the country needed last year. Part of the prob lem is administrative—Tanzania ex ported 70,000 tons of maize at th beginning of 1980—and part due t a drought throughout East Africa.

Ujamaas replicate the unproductive performance of collectivized agriculture throughout the world. A scholar from UCLA concluded tha "collective villagization was the ma jor cause of a crisis in agricultura production of calamitous propor

ins." Mwalimu might scoff at such pitalistic scholarship, much as his ess explained a decline in world ffee prices, which are crucial for ınzania's foreign exchange, as "a pitalist plot being hatched in the est, particularly in the United ates" to "justify their campaign ainst small nations." But Mwalimu uld not so easily scorn the report French economist René Dumont, nom he invited for a three-month idy in 1979. As a good socialist. amont found that even though only elve of the 8,000 communes qualas true ujamaas, Tanzania reains "the best hope for African cialism." As a good agronomist, wever, Dumont called the collece program a failure thus far, since had moved peasants too far from eir fields, pushed them into poor oducts for export, and resulted in reaucrats' not making use of "peasit expertise and preferences."

The system remains in place and favor. An article in the October 980 issue of New African says typiilly that ujamaas "more than anying else . . . broadcast Tanzania's ell over so many around the world" nd that ujamaa "has become an iternational by-word for the path at well-meaning political commenttors would like to see Third World ountries tread." Though Tanzania as less food available per person ian even Bangladesh and many of s citizens are similarly hungry, Iwalimu says, "We have had a taste f socialism and have now come to 1e conclusion that it suits us." Some f Nyerere's aides spoke mockingly me of the capitalistic Kenyans as "man-eat-man" society. When I loved on to Nairobi, I heard jovial enyans mock Tanzania's "man-eatothing" society.\* With its industry,

professions, and agriculture faltering, Tanzania is eight to ten months behind in payments to foreign creditors. It has also reached its limits for commercial loans. A war in neighboring Uganda, oil price hikes, poor production, and falling world coffee prices all contribute to a bleak picture.

The Tanzanian economy is not without growth sectors; three stand out. First, the government bureaucracy has been increasing by 14 percent a year, and thus has doubled since 1972. Second and related, government expenditures are growing twice as fast as the GNP itself. Third, magendo, or black-market corruption. is flourishing. This is saddest of all, since in former times Tanzania had long and justifiably distinguished itself from the kleptocracies scattered around sub-Saharan Africa. Mwalimu himself is above reproach, though neither his system nor his officials are any longer.

Y Most memorable moments in Tanzania were spent gazing at a finance official's neat chart and listening to his clear presentation. Tanzania's trade balance was here in 1976—down here in 1977—further down in 1978—even lower, here, in 1979—and sure to be at the bottom in 1980. It seemed strange how he smiled all the while, but the exposition was proof of how desperately Tanzania needs more foreign aid.

Mwalimu sparkles here as in no other endeavor. He adroitly plays his strong suit, diplomacy with the West, to rustle up some \$600 million of foreign aid yearly. Tanzania receives more foreign assistance per capita than any other African country and ranks among the top recipients in the world. Aid dispensers flock to Mwalimu, checkbook in hand-\$100 million from the Swedes, upward of \$90 million from the Dutch and from Canada, \$50 million from West Germany, and \$23 million this year from the United States (on top of the \$218 million the U.S. has given since Tanzania became independent).

First prize in the contest goes to the World Bank, with upward of

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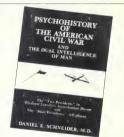
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The book is available the high Harper's, Dept. XX, 2 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016, at \$10.50 or deding postage.

<sup>\*</sup> In Dar, officials concede that Kenya as a superior per capita income (\$270 s. \$190), but contend that Tanzania has uperior income distribution. If true, this would substantiate Winston Churchill's uip that the "inherent vice of capitalism is the unequal sharing of blessings; the aherent vitrue of socialism is the equal haring of miseries." But it is not true, t least according to statistics on the proportion of the country's total income received by the poorest 20 percent of the opulation (Kenya, 3.9 percent vs. Tanania, 2.3 percent).

\$150 million per year. In May 1975 the Washington Post reported: "The real African favorite of the World Bank is undoubtedly Tanzania," Robert McNamara made a pilgrimage to Dar again in January 1980 to offer a "structural adjustment loan," a budgetary bail-out, in fact, of \$60 million annually in interest-free loans over the next five years. This, on top of the existing millions for Tanzanian ventures, from the cultivation of pyrethrum flowers to storing grain. These foreign funds underwrite the flabby ujamaa framework, as a 1978 World Bank paper indicates: "As long as food aid (or long term loans for food purchases) is supplied to Tanzania by the industrial nations, the social experiment will continue."

Mwalimu finds the going easy with McNamara and the World Bank. Not so, however, with its sister institution. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has traditionally handed out structural adjustment loans, but it has tied such bail-outs to tough reforms. Sympathizing with Tanzania's painful economic ills, in 1979 the IMF sent out a team carrying the standard package of proposals—curbs on government spending, an end to price controls, devaluation of the currency, and higher domestic bank lending rates

Mwalimu was incensed. He said, correctly, that "the IMF could never understand our plan for economic recovery"—few could—and that it wanted "to make us change our chosen course. They come with really foolish advice. They are wasting their time." Agreeing on the latter point, the IMF team departed. The dispute heated up. Mwalimu, at his most indignant, blasted the IMF as "a device by which powerful economic forces in some rich countries increase their power over the poor nations of the world."

In the ensuing ten months tempers flared up and died down, and a deal was struck. African News reported: "In an extraordinary turnabout, the IMF has now abandoned some of the conditions it had originally placed on the loan," such as curbs on the public sector, alterations of import controls, and devaluation of the currency. The New York Times reported

that the \$235 million loan, which is 327 percent of Tanzania's IMF quota was "accompanied by far more lenient terms than those usually demanded of borrowers from the fund." The loan was announced in an IMF press release that could have been written by Mwalimu, According to this release. Tanzania's economic difficulties stem less from government policies than from "exogenous factors," These include "more recent political developments in the region" -diplomatic parlance for the Tanzanian invasion and occupation of Uganda, which cost Tanzania at least \$500 million. Nyerere's government is congratulated for its "prudent stance in fiscal policy" among other

Tanzania's near-total dependence on foreign aid does not dampen Mwalimu's invocations of self-reliance, nor his aversion to foreign aid, which, he said, is "offered by most countries as if it were charity for which we should be 'deserving poor' in the best traditions of feudalism—also very grateful!" Nyerere's views on aid are widely quoted and applauded for their coherence, consistency, and conviction.

HEN ASKED in the mid-1960s what Tanzania would be like in the 1980s. Mwalimu said he hoped there would be no Tanzania, just one unified Africa. His national anthem is "God Bless Africa." He is a founding father of the OAU and regularly lauds its founding principles of noninterference in the affairs of other African nations and the sanctity of borders. He can become passionate in their defense, as in 1976, when he castigated Israel for violating Uganda's sanctity during the Entebbe rescue mission of its hostages. Not that Mwalimu's own record here is pure. To quote David Lamb again: "No other African president has ever overthrown a neighboring government. Nyerere has helped topple three the Comoros in 1975, the Seychelles in 1977 and Uganda in 1979." Of the three examples, Uganda is worth a closer inspection.

On October 30, 1978, Idi Amin i vaded and annexed 710 square milof northern Tanzania in what called a "record in world history" the "supersonic speed of 25 minutes" Mwalimu appealed to the OAU d bating hall—he was soon blasting t ineffective OAU as a "trade unic for tyrants"-while Amin preferre the ring, proposing that he, weigh ing in at a husky 280 pounds, fig the brittle Nyerere in a boxing mate to be refereed by Muhammad A Nyerere wisely declined and hit back at the "snake" Amin, who, he sai was mentally deranged by syphili The playfulness ended as 1979 b gan. On January 18 Uganda's fir president, Milton Obote (who ha been living in Dar all the while broke an eight-year silence to a vocate Amin's ouster. Two days late

Amin moved on Tanzania. Mwalimu was not amused th time. His 45,000 Tanzanian soldie sent Amin running for his life. S jubilant was Mwalimu that he o ficially recognized the leaders Uganda's "liberators" while the were still outside Uganda (plar trouble had delayed their departure At the time, everyone realized the Nverere had violated the OAU's tw most sacrosanct principles. But som commentators, myself included, fe that Nyerere's triumph over bestia ity was worth the bad preceden But some 10,000 Tanzanian troop remain in Uganda as an "occupa tion army." Unlike most occupatio armies, however, the force is pai by the host country. Uganda hand over \$1 million a month, or aroun a quarter of its entire budget, for the Tanzanian soldiers. They, taking classical view of a liberator's pe guisites, have pilfered the remainin crumbs of Amin's once lovely state The New York Times quotes a blac city councilman from Uganda's car ital: "We have had the experience of the Tanzanians, and now we nee a force from a civilized country. Such whites "would not want ou watches and our shoes, our clothes. These are definitely not the views of Mwalimu, who in December 197 made Uganda sign an agreement a lowing his troops to stay there for up to two years, and who believe would not be either "logical or genmanly to withdraw our troops om Uganda before we accomplish e task."

What the task may be, only Mwanu and God know. But it may inlve Nyerere's control over the ighboring state. Since Amin fled, o Ugandan presidents have been sted, apparently by none other than walimu. First to go was the acadeician and politician Yusufu Lule. fter only sixty-eight days in office. ile was summoned to Dar for con-Itations with Mwalimu. He dutilly went, in June 1979, to be swiftly ripped of power, placed under use arrest, and then sent packing Britain. From there, Dr. Lule publy discusses Nyerere's plans for a gandan-Tanzanian federation that Il start a chain of satellite socialist ates "similar to those of eastern rope." Lule's claims might have en dismissed as those of a loser d there been no rerun eleven onths later. By then Godfrey Biuisa was in power, an internationalrespected attorney who had praced in New York during the Amin ars. He had no love of socialism it urged international business inolvement, following Kenya's model, id edged out some pro-Nyerere soalists in Uganda. Mwalimu made series of angry telephone calls and en had Binaisa placed under house rest by Tanzanian troops in May 980. The script was the same, exept that Binaisa somehow smuggled at an impassioned letter to Presient Carter to "please help," since e was a "virtual prisoner" for carring out "the unforgivable sin" of lanning free elections. "Please make w brother Nverere see reason.... is attitude is causing all democrats Uganda and Africa great conern.... he has for no reason transerred his affections to a military ikeover." He remained locked up.

With Obote's return to power in lecember 1980, Mwalimu does not eed to make angry telephone calls, and Tanzanian troops do not need to lace foreign presidents under house trest. Obote's earlier record as Uganan president may have been ingloious, and he is highly unpopular in arts of Uganda. But he is ideolog-

ically committed to socialism and personally committed to Mwalimu. Obote announced his new campaign for the presidency with the words, "The only issue in the election is whether you are pro- or anti-Tanzanian."

HIS IS ALL their affair, as is the breakup of the East African Community—so long heralded as the foundation of Pan-Africanism—which collapsed in 1977. One year later Nyerere closed his border with Kenya, partly to keep its capitalist "immorality" from creeping southward.

But more intriguing than "Nyerere, the Tanzanian president" or "Nyerere, the East African unifier" is "Nyerere, the world statesman." With Mwalimu's renown based upon his pleas for a more just distribution of wealth between developed and developing nations, and for basic human decency, one would expect his leanings to be decisively Western. Again Mwalimu defies expectation. His spread-the-wealth campaign never mentions communist countries, who contribute only 0.04 percent per capita of their collective GNP for development aid. Nor are they attacked for their disregard of human rights; rather it is Great Britain that his press called the "great champion of oppression."

Mwalimu can distinguish friend from foe. He commonly calls America "imperialistic" and "hegemonic" and he "welcomed" Russian and Cuban military intervention in Africa, since their reasons for it "are well known and completely understandable to all reasonable people." To him, the threat is clear. "The greater immediate danger to Africa's freedom comes from nations in [the] Western bloc," he told the entire diplomatic corps of Dar at an unprecedented meeting in June 1978.

The Soviet invasion of nonaligned Afghanistan placed the nonaligned Mwalimu in a quandary. Though his envoy voted to condemn the move in the U.N., as did all states except full-fledged Soviet puppets, Mwalimu himself was uncharacteristically quiet. The Tanzanian Embas-

sy in Washington said he made no statement. Not that he totally ignored the topic, for he twice mentioned the invasion publicly in order to criticize the U.S., first for advocating a boycott of the Moscow Olympics. Mwalimu later referred to the Soviet invasion again in passing, while blasting the United States for increasing its Indian Ocean naval deployments and seeking bases in Kenya and Somalia. Such activities clearly violate the OAU charter and the "principles of our unity." Quite consistent with Mwalimu's words, Tanzania helped push the OAU to condemn the U.S. base at Diego Garcia, some 2,000 miles off the African continent, as a "threat to Africa." The OAU did not mention the 38,000 Cuban troops and 12,000 Soviet, East German, Czech, etc., military personnel right there on the African continent.

Mwalimu is a marvel on the world stage. He is a kind of genius, a man capable of changing the ideas, visions, and sensibilities of his contemporaries. Over two decades, Nverere has been the repository of the hopes and ideals of writers who genuflect toward the third world. He in turn magnificently plays to these audiences, who themselves have doubts about capitalism and sense that justice flows from the left, tyranny from the right. Hence Mwalimu's power of persuasion when he highlights the gnawing disparities between Western affluence and strength, and third world poverty and feebleness. Hence his following when he arouses strong subconscious feelings that large powers like the United States are inherently wicked, small powers like Tanzania inherently pure.

Nyerer could succeed with his campaign, in office or out. In the early 1960s he often mused about relinquishing power. In 1975 and again in 1980 he said he would not run again. It would do him well to honor the pledge. His departure would, I believe, enhance his reputation. Richard II made a far more appealing character out of office, when his dismal performance had faded behind his sparkling personality and captivating pronouncements.

HARPER'S/JULY 1981

We're doing what has to be done

# Arson For Profit.

The cost in lives and dollars is appalling. That's why Property-Casualty insurance companies are doing their part to reduce this serious crime.

We've all seen the headlines: "Building gutted by fire, 28 dead, scores injured,"

Whether it's a quiet nursing home or a bustling hotel, the scenario is basically the same: A fire starts and suddenly is out of control. Firemen and related emergency services struggle desperately to rescue lives and save property.

The smoke clears and the fire marshal makes his report. Too often it includes the word: arson.

Arson for profit is only a small part of the total arson problem. Most fires are not set for profit. The largest percentage of arson fires is caused by vandals, revenge seekers, or people in need of psychiatric help.

Arson has become a serious social problem. Its solutions demand innovative, coordinated efforts—not only by the insurance business, but by law enforcement authorities, fire inspectors, builders, and legislators.

Property-Casualty insurance companies — acting through the Insurance Committee for Arson Control—help and encourage those important groups to get together. So far, I25 Arson Task Forces have been formed in 41 states.



Meanwhile, insurance companies themselves have been working to reduce the incidence of arson. A prime example, one aimed specifically at arson for profit, is the Property Insurance Loss Register.

This computerized cross-index of fire claims over \$500 is programmed to react whenever a "match-up" of similar characteristics occurs among current and previous claims.

The PILR computer

The PILR computer contains hundreds of thousands of claims, and hundreds more are added every day. They come from the insurance companies that write about 90% of the fire coverage in the United States. In its first year, the Register generated a thousand alerts. From them, insurance companies investigate and uncover arson for profit schemes that otherwise would remain undetected.

These leads are essential, because arson often is hard to spot and even harder to prove. It takes time to investigate suspicious fires; to sift rubble for clues to physical evidence, much of which may have been burned up; to probe for financial circumstances which would indicate motive.

Meanwhile, well-intentioned state laws frequently require prompt claims settlement or notice of reason for delay. Other laws have prevented law enforcement officials and insurers from sharing information about a claim. And, insurance investigators face lawsuits for libel, slander, or bad faith if their claim denial or charge of suspected arson doesn't stand up in court.

All this has had a chilling effect on investigation of possible fraudulent insurance claims.

But Property-Casualty insurance companies are fighting back. They sponsor fire fraud workshops around the country to train thousands of adjusters and claims people. They seek law changes which will remove incentives

for arson and make arson easier to investigate, while protecting the privacy of the policyholder. They are testing an insurance application form designed to identify and deter potential arson fraud. They developed a model code which makes arson a serious felony and provides appropriate penalties.

Significant operational changes in the many FAIR Plans across the country (where Property-Casualty insurance companies maintain facilities to insure high risk properties) are also making it harder for arsonists to prosper. Inspection practices and underwriting procedures are stronger. Increasingly, claims for fires of a suspicious nature are resisted. New government guidelines give FAIR Plans more flexibility in denying applications and in cancelling insurance coverage. Property owners are threatened with loss of coverage unless unsafe conditions are corrected.

Clearly, progress is being made. Society may never be able to eliminate arson, any more than it can eliminate any other serious crime. However, through increased public concern, improved legislation, training, and the growing level of cooperation among community groups, insurance companies, fire fighters, and law enforcement authorities, we believe the crime of arson can be brought under closer control.



# We're working to keep insurance affordable.

his message presented by the American Insurance Association, 85 John Street, NY, NY 10038

## A PATENT ON KNOWLEDGE

Harvard goes public

by Wayne Biddle

ATE IN 1974, Harvard University and the Monsanto Company entered into an agreement that Science magazine called "unprecedented in the annals of academic-business affairs." Although publicity was sparse (or merely sensational: HARVARD MED-ICAL, MONSANTO JOIN IN HISTORIC PROJECT ON CANCER, read one headline), it was evident that the two giants had struck an uncommon deal. Essentially, Harvard sold Monsanto the patent rights to a biomedical research project for \$23 million. Observers in the science community might have been happy to congratulate Harvard for getting such a bargain—especially given the doubtful prospects of the particular research -had the deal not contained some questionable features.

First, Harvard received an undis-

by Science to be at least \$12 million out of the total, but recently gauged by Harvard general counsel Daniel Steiner to be about \$4 million-for its general endowment This sum is initially being used to support people affiliated with the project, but will eventually become string-free. Steiner characterizes the transaction by saying that Monsanto "generously agreed to supply funds for endowment in addition to the monies needed to support the research." Second, Harvard changed its patent policy, which for years had been simply that "No patents primarily concerned with therapeutics or public health may be taken out ... except for dedication to the public." Apparently the Monsanto arrangement hinged on discarding this traditional guideline. And third, the standard practice of peer review through faculty committees and public comment was avoided during the year and a half of negotiations that preceded final agreement. As a Science report er lamented in 1977 after trying to interview principal figures in the affair, "There is a mystique in science that things should always be completely open—probably reinforced because federal money is usually involved—but it was not operating here"

XCEPT FOR semiconductor companies and the still esoteric commerce of bioengineering-which have both largely abandoned traditional management techniques-there is little evidence to support the thesis of American reindustrialization It is also a fact that universities and the individuals who work at them are feeling pinched for funds these days. The great increase in federal support for research that began during World War II and continued through the 1960s is no more; funds are shrinking. Even megacephalous Harvard, with an endowment larger than the gross domestic product of many Caribbean nations, claims to be hard up.

It would appear natural, then, that a working partnership might be born of these parallel difficulties. During the early 1970s, in fact, when the first slowdown of federal money for universities was exacerbated by cut-backs in aerospace research, and De-



ment of Defense funding was nped on by the Mansfield Amendit (which says that DoD campus nev must be limited to projects a "direct and apparent relationto a specific military function peration"), universities began to ive their ties with industry. Of rse, this was still the pre-Embargo , when inflation was trivial and surces seemed limitless, so the ical "with our brains and your ney" approach did not strike a rending chord. Besides plain concension, there was also a lot of entment left over from the Vietn years, when many colleges had ered their ties to industry on morgrounds.

Yet, as David Noble documented in serica by Design-Science, Techogy and the Rise of Corporate pitalism, university science and enseering in this country were aimed meeting industry's demands from late nineteenth century onward. ere have been ups and downs in relationship-and a long, flat ped after World War II when governent was too generous for business compete with-but the academic ence community has always been rt of a commercial network, highow talk about "pure" versus "apied" research notwithstanding. Corrate funding livened up considerly, needless to say, after inflation ared, resources began to seem fite, and the morally concerned asses graduated.

T MIT, which has taught the world how government, industry, and academy can scratch one another's backs. ere have been several noteworthy ents in the daily marketing of ience, which, in the language of the istitute's professoriat, is known as echnology transfer." Since World 'ar II alone, more than 250 comanies have been spun off from the istitute, which last year received 138,411,000 in federal sponsorship, ot counting Pentagon support of incoln Laboratory. If MIT had only 10 percent interest in these enterrises-even in just the semiconuctor and computer firms along Boston's Route 128—it would need neither an alumni fund nor Washington. Much glory has been gained from the parentage, but to a college treasurer glory is a circle in the water.

Perhaps with this common sense in mind, in 1972 MIT's president. Jerome Wiesner, gave Richard Morse -veteran venture capitalist, former director of army research, and Sloan School of Management professorthe task of setting up something called the MIT Development Foundation. Inc. With an initial stake of \$50,000, the foundation would identify promising projects at the Institute and act as a broker among researchers, entrepreneurs, and managers. In return, MIT would obtain an equity position in new firms it helped to start. "We want to find out how Route 128 happened and then do something about making it happen again," Morse told Business Week. Chartered as a tax-exempt, charitable corporation with MIT holding a majority of the directors' seats, the foundation was to attract more monev from commercial sponsors, who could thereby find out about new ventures early on, and deduct their donation from taxes.

During this same period, coincidentally, Wiesner discovered that memoranda had been circulating in the White House urging President Nixon to cut off MIT's federal research funds. One was sent in 1971 from staff secretary Ion Huntsman to John Ehrlichman, Henry Kissinger, and George Shultz, another in 1972 from Ehrlichman to the president himself. Labeled "Confidential / Sensitive," they stated explicitly that MIT's subsidies should be curtailed because of Wiesner's opposition to the antiballistic missile system and general "antidefense bias." Wiesner also earned a place, it should be recalled, on Charles Colson's famous "enemies" list. Although there is no ostensible link between these threats and the formation of the MIT Development Foundation (actually, federal grants to the Institute steadily increased), the memoranda seemed to point up the climate of suspicion that was causing many universities to take a fresh look at industrial sponsorship.

Another story of that time foreshadows more recent events. During the early Seventies, several MIT researchers explored the feasibility of the use of methanol as a substitute for gasoline. Predictably, spokesmen for oil and auto companies-Exxon. Chevron, and GM, among otherslined up against the gasohol concept. One MIT chemist who was impressed by methanol's potential received an unsolicited \$100,000 grant from a Minnesota oilman who foresaw petroleum shortages. He took these funds and a plan to test a methanol blend on a fleet of cars to MIT's newly formed Energy Laboratory, which accepted the project and the \$100,000. The Institute's vice president for research cleared the test and a chemical company offered supplies.

Now it just so happened that the Energy Lab's primary funding came from two unrestricted \$500,000 grants from Exxon and Ford, whose donations arrived just after the Minnesota money. Moreover, seven of the twenty-four members of the Laboratory's advisory board were from the oil and auto industries. A few months after the gasohol project's acceptance, the Lab director informed its principal investigator that the fleet test was under review. Shortly thereafter, the balance of the \$100,000 was transferred to the research account of a mechanical engineering professor who, along with a visiting Exxon scientist, recommended that the project be terminated. Then, after a meeting at which the principal investigator presented his plans, the entire endeavor was canceled. Energy Lab administrators denied any outside pressure on the decision. claiming it was based on methodological inadequacies, lack of national significance, and general inappropriateness. A test that might have lent early credibility to synthetic fuels was killed, not redesigned.

is enormously expensive. The business of America is business, and the richness of our civilization is derived from the give-and-take of

free institutions. The great halls of most colleges are named after industrial benefactors. Faculty members in every field of knowledge act as paid consultants to corporations. When a company sponsors university research, why shouldn't it get something in return? Anyway, if we want our republic to survive the age of scarcity, we had better be willing to come down off a few of our higher horses.

If so, let us take a closer look at recent developments at Harvard and MIT. One must keep in mind, of course, that these neighbors are not the only universities that cultivate business activity. Stanford changed from a land-rich, endowment-poor tennis club into the West's premier educational edifice by fostering the growth of Silicon Valley.

Daniel Steiner occupies an office of colonial flavor in Massachusetts Hall, the president's quarters in Harvard Yard. As general counsel, he plays a front role in the university's relations with the business world. Last fall, when Harvard was considering whether to hold equity in a bioengineering firm started by its faculty, Steiner circulated a "discussion memorandum." He noted that "participation by Harvard in the structuring of the business arrangements and the possibility of some Harvard involvement in forming policies in a company may be of assistance to the faculty members involved and, more generally, to the function of the academic community." The memorandum urged "some prudent risk taking" in the world of technology transfer. As Harvard approaches its 339th commencement, prudence may indeed be the only virtue it has left.

"It is in industry's self-interest to try to form more connections or alliances with universities." Steiner told me "and to henefit from the research that is going on." America's stagnant productivity and the bleak outlook for federal research funding are bringing industry and university back together. More specifically, he said, "the possibility of royalties from patents, if something is developed at universities, is of obvious interest to us in providing future research support." There are social as well as macroeconomic imperatives. however.

"You have more scientists at universities today who are interested in some kind of involvement in the practical world. These are people who are involved in basic research and who want to be university scientists. At the same time, for both emotional and psychological reasons -and for financial needs-they are interested in the outside world. It's a change from scientists of fifty years ago. The expectation level is higher in terms of the economic rewards that might come from their work. There are fewer people who say, 'I've chosen the academic life, that means I'll earn much less, and so be it." Steiner says that the opinions of the Harvard community regarding technology transfer cover every portion of the spectrum, but maintain that if one takes too moral a potion in these matters of commerce liaison, one soon finds oneself in empty house. He also points out the many other major research universities have adopted self-serving parent policies in recent years, and the Harvard was therefore in danger falling behind.

T MIT attention has focus lately on a ten-year, \$8-m lion deal between the Ene gy Laboratory and, agai Exxon. That the agreement repr sents a departure from MIT's norm policy toward industrial sponsorshis downplayed by Institute admiistrators, yet a comparison of the language used in different public a nouncements reveals several mut tions. For example, under the heaing "Publications and Copyrights in the MIT Guide to Research Agre ments with Industrial Sponsors, or finds the following:

The Institute's research activities are conducted as an integral part of the total educational program, and much of it forms the basis for articles in professional journals, seminar reports, presentations at professional society meetings, and student dissertations and theses.

The Institute cannot, therefore, undertake research or studies the scientific results of which cannot be published or otherwise disseminated or which cannot be published without the Sponsor's prior approval.

In the specific Exxon agreemen however, these notes appear unde "Publications and Publicity":

MIT is encouraged to freely publish and openly disseminate the results of the research, subject, however, to prior review (and possible delay in publication of up to 90 days) in order to ensure adequate patent protection for MIT and MIT/Exxon contract inventions.

Exxon has the right to review proposed publications prior to submittal for publication and to notify MIT whether the proposed publication contains patentable

#### A FABLE

#### by David Ignatow

Once upon a time a man stole a wolf from among its pack and said to the wolf, "Stop, you're snapping at my fingers," and the wolf replied, "I'm hungry. What have you got to eat?" And the man replied, "Chopped Liver and sour cream." The wolf said, "I'll take sour cream. I remember having it once before at Aunt Millie's. May I bare my teeth in pleasure?" And the man replied, "Of course, if you'll come along quietly," and the wolf replied, "What do you think I am? Just because I like sour cream you expect me to change character?" The man thought about that. After all, what was he doing, stealing a wolf from its kind, as if he were innocent of wrongdoing? He let the wolf free but later was sorry; he missed talking with the wolf and went in search of it, but the pack kept running away from him each time he drew close. He kept chasing and the pack kept running away. It was a kind of relationship.

# IN THE HARPER'S TRADITION

William Faulkner on Billy Carter
Mark Twain on Atlantic City
Winslow Homer on Key West
Theodore Dreiser on the trial of Jean Harris
Henry James on the wedding of Prince Charles
Herman Melville on the space shuttle
Joseph Conrad on the CIA in Angola
Stephen A. Douglas on busing
Rudyard Kipling on Mrs. Gandhi
Ernest Hemingway on the drug trade in Florida
Woodrow Wilson on SALT
Sinclair Lewis on George Steinbrenner

Sometimes it would be nice to bring back an old contributor to do an article, but the fact is that while the names of our writers have changed over the years, the quality of the magazine has not.

> Where tomorrow's Melvilles, Conrads, Twains are published today

> > Harpers

subject matter on which Exxon recommends the filing of patent applications.

Under "Patents" in the Guide, the following appears:

The Institute...retains title to inventions made under its sponsored programs with the understanding that it will license them in the public interest under an active patent management program in which licensing of industrial research sponsors is an important part. Both the Institute and the inventor share in the proceeds of royalty bearing licenses.

Yet under "Grants by MJT and Exxon" in the Energy Lab agreement:

Exxon and its affiliates hold an irrevocable, worldwide, nonexclusive, royalty-free license under all sole and joint contract patents without accounting to MIT.

Another paragraph gives Exxon a share of royalties even if MIT licenses a third party.

"The [Exxon] arrangement was worked out very carefully," says physicist Francis Low, MIT provost and former director of the Laboratory for Nuclear Science, "It is an example of the problem that occurs when businesses contribute a lot of money: everyone immediately thinks that somehow they are 'buying' a service, and are therefore a constraint on the research laboratory. To a certain extent, that's bound to be true. Naturally, the available money will push research people in one direction. We have to be careful with industrial funding that in fact we're not getting started by company pressure or giving them answers that they want." As an afterthought, he adds, "These conditions are also true of government funding." The Exxon agreement supposedly represents MIT's limits regarding so-called directed research. "We have agreed to protect the proprietary information that we receive from Exxon, but the research we do is open as far as publication is concerned." The provost goes on to explain that at MIT, proprietary data is treated much the same way as classified data from, say, the air force. A researcher may be given secret information for experimental work, and he would then have to withhold reference to this information upon publication or discussion of his results. (He does not speculate on how this might affect MIT's "total educational program.")
Low takes care to emphasize that MIT does not get richer "in any free way" from Exxon-style arrangements. Such a comment may or may not be a shot at his Harvard competitors and their string-free Monsanto money.

N THEORY (and theories are important in the academic world). university scholarship is supposed to be insulated from the heat of capitalism. Perhaps the study of Petrarch's sonnets is, but microelectronics or recombinant DNA or combustion research is not. Even the appearance of a profit motive in scholarship tends to destroy confidence in it. Historically, university research has been the source of random discoveries that have spawned science-based industries. Taxpayers' money is present at every stage of this work, used in the faith that the return on public investment will benefit all. College administrators invariably offer assurance that their first concerns when considering new sources of funding are quality of education and protection of academic freedom. Yet the old tradition, that if you're nice to people, they'll take care of you, has been replaced in many instances by contract language that, at least symbolically, permits corporations to gain a toehold on a not-for-profit body.

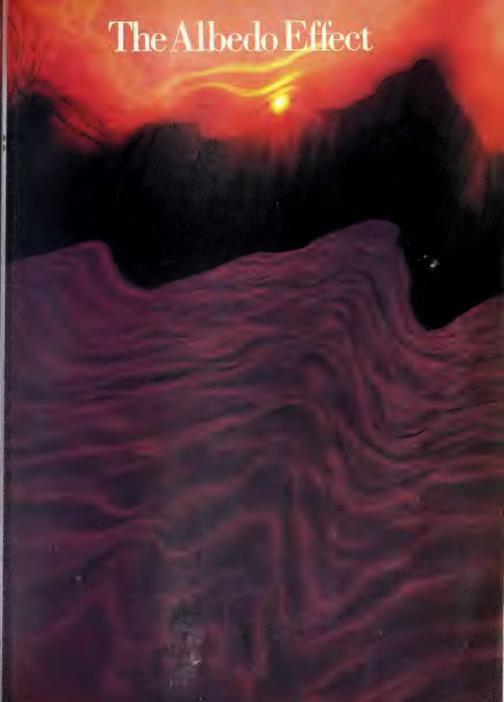
Observers agree that wide-ranging, long-term arrangements like Harvard/Monsanto and MIT/Exxon will be rare. Only the most affluent companies can afford to support such large research establishments outside their own walls. The real perversion of academic independence may occur through the collective impact of many smaller ties. But should any corporation be able to capitalize on facilities and expertise acquired through public investment? After all, Exxon and Monsanto go to universities only because the creation of similar laboratories in their own domain is not economical. To answer yes, as

many administrators and technology transfer mavens do, requires a one big-happy-family vision of our so ciety that does not square with ever the most perfunctory glance at the

MIT abandoned its Developmen Foundation in 1977 because Richard Morse retired and the few companies started by it performed poorly (the Institute still holds equity in one of the firms). Harvard decided last year not to join a faculty bioengineering venture. Daniel Steiner and Francis Low firmly acknowledge that there are areas where stockholder-beholden corporations and public-minded universities cannot work comfortably together, where academic values and financial stakes are in insoluble conflict. But will everyone tread so carefully? This year the New York State Assembly approved a bill that revises state university patent policies to give researchers and faculty members a bigger percentage of any profits from commercial development of their ideas. And the regents of the University of California have made a deal with the Emerson Radio Corporation that allows an Emerson subsidiary to commercialize patent rights relating to computerized scanners. Emerson will contribute between a million and a million and a half dollars to the venture and receive commensurate tax benefits.

The question that remains is not whether academic freedom and the quality of education are being maintained, but whether the problems of society are being solved. If everyone agrees that Exxon and Monsanto are in the best position to do this, then so be it. Undoubtedly they are moving in the great tradition of Henry S. Pritchett, president of MIT in 1900, whose solution to society's ills was cooperation between industries and schools by trading financial support for technically trained manpower. "The research men of a nation," he wrote in an essay entitled "The Function of Scientific Research in a Modern State," "are not isolated individuals but an organized and cooperating army." An army, one might add today, that wants its share of the spoils.

HARPER'S/JULY 1981



### The Albedo Effect

Mathematical models of the atmosphere are the chief scientific tools for predicting long-term climate and identifying possible climatic changes that may result from man's activities. Recent advances at the General Motors Research Laboratories have revealed new information about the contribution airborne particles to the delicate thermal balance of the earth's atmosphere.



Regions of heating and cooling determined by

Radiation scattering exhibited by a layer of particles. The inset shows the distribution of

EVOID of its atmosphere. the bare earth would reach an average temperature of only −1°C. Atmospheric interacation raises the average surface temperature to fifteen degrees Celsius, making life as we know it possible. Small fluctuations in scale effects. It is believed that a drop of a few degrees Celsius lasting for a period as short as four years could trigger an ice age. Fundamental studies conducted at the General Motors Research Laboratories explore the effect of various atmospheric factors, natural and man-made, on the earth's thermal

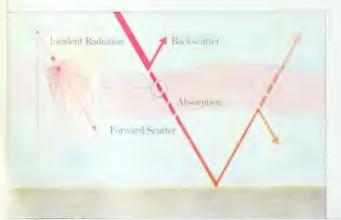
New knowledge of the influence of airborne particles on the earth's thermal balance has

been revealed by investigation carried out by Dr. Ruth Rec Dr. Reck's work at General Moto integrated for the first time the complex factor of particles in radiative-convective—atmospher models. Her findings help determine under what conditions paticles have a cooling influence, at under what conditions they have heating influence.

Airborne particles hay many sources: volcanic issu wind-raised dust and sea salt, as soot, direct and indirect products of combustion and industrial procesing, the products of the decay of plant and animal life, the liquidroplets and ice crystals that mak up clouds. Particles alter the radition flow in the atmosphere by the processes of scattering and absortion. Particles differ by size an composition, factors which determined the salt of the sal

mine optical properties. Prior to Dr. Reck's wor, models for calculating the vertical temperature profile included layer of clouds and the significan gases—O<sub>2</sub>. O<sub>3</sub>. H<sub>2</sub>O and CO<sub>2</sub>—but neglected the particle factor. To establish the thermal effect of paticles, later models assumed a uniform vertical temperature change.

Dr. Reck's contribution wa to add the particle factor to a on dimensional model developed a the Geophysical Fluid Dynamic Laboratory at Princeton Unive sity. This model divides the atmesphere into nine layers. An initia temperature distribution is a sumed, and the model is used to compute the net radiative energy.



w into or out of each laver. A rticle population is input for each ver. Calculated radiation imbalices result in a temperature ange for each layer within the odel, subject to the condition that ange in temperature with altide not exceed the adiabatic lapse te. The new temperatures are sed to compute a new radiation llance. This process is repeated itil there are no further changes temperature.

The particles of interest. nown as Mie-scattering aerosols. e comparable in size to the wavength of the incident radiation. Dr. eck models the interaction of ese particles with the radiation eld in terms of two parameters: e single scattering albedo of the article, which describes backscatr, and an anisotropic scattering ctor, which measures the degree forward scatter. From these two rantities and the size distribution and abundance of the particles, the ansmission, absorption and backcatter of each layer in the model in be calculated.

R. RECK discovered that whether particles have a eating or cooling influence deends upon the surface albedo, or eflective power, of the earth diectly beneath them. Snow (0.6) is 10re reflective than sand (0.3): ater is less reflective than either 0.07). Her results indicate that then surface albedo is small, the et effect of particles is to "shield" ne earth from incoming solar radiation, producing a cooling influence. When surface albedo is large. a trapping effect prevails, in which the portion of solar radiation that reaches the earth's surface is "trapped" between the surface and the particles, producing a net heating influence. The competition between these two effects, shielding and trapping, determines the overall thermal influence of particles.

Dr. Reck calculated that for the latitudes between the equator and 35°N, where average surface albedo is low, the current background level of atmospheric particles decreases solar radiation reaching the earth by  $\sim 1\%$ , thus producing a net cooling effect. Her findings indicate that heating takes place at latitudes north of 55°N, where average surface albedo is high. Calculations with the model indicate a correlation between the increase in particle abundance due to volcanic activity in 1970 and a subsequent ice build-up in 1971

equately take into account the role played by particles in the earth's thermal balance," says Dr. Reck. changing. It is important for us to understand the elements that affect how man's activities influence the atmosphere.

### LINOW BEHIND WORK

Dr. Ruth Reck is a Staff Research Scientist in the Physics Depart-Laboratories.

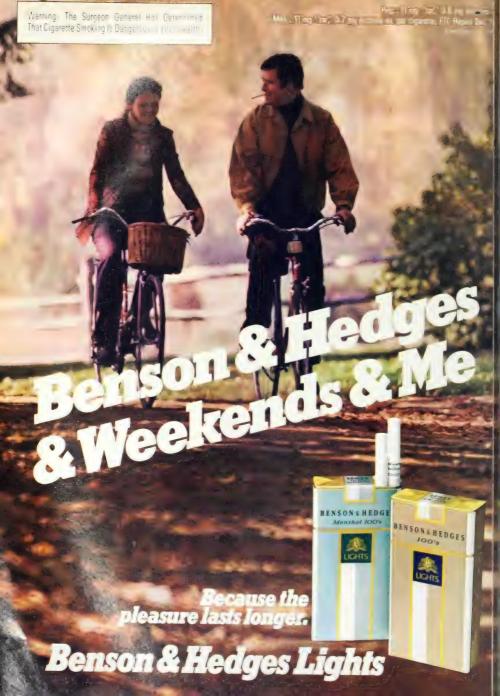
General Motors Research



Dr. Reck received her Ph.D. in physical chemistry from the University of Minnesota. Her thesis, on the statistical mechanics of heterogeneous systems, concerned the theory of diffusion-controlled chemical reactions. Prior to joining General Motors in 1965, she was a Research Associate in the Applied Mathematics Department of

In addition to global climate studies, Dr. Reck has done research at General Motors in solid state physics and magnetic materials. Over the last seven years, she has participated in several international exchange programs on climate-related subjects.





### **Harper's**

# GILDING THE NEWS

The artful press

by Lewis H. Lapham

I really look with commiseration over the great body of my fellow citizens who, reading newspapers, live and die in the belief that they have known something of what has been passing in the world in their time.

-Harry Truman

I don't hold with high falutin' talk....I'm a newspaperman. I tell stories.

-Derek Jameson, former editor, the Daily Express (London)

N NEW YORK these days the lawyers advising book publishers on libel matters ask for revisions in the fiction. The lawyers no longer make much of a distinction between what is true, what might be true, what a plaintiff will say is true. If the author of a lascivious novel has portrayed an actress living in California, and if somebody knows a woman who vaguely fits the description and can afford the price of a lawsuit, maybe it is safer to change the character into a man and move his story to Connecticut. With works of nonfiction the lawyers take even more elaborate precautions. The anonymous source of information becomes as adept as a secret agent at moving his place of residence, acquiring a new occupation, revising his nationality and date of birth.

Given the dubious composition of the stuff sold in the literary markets as imitations of reality, the indignant denunciations of the Washington Post in April seemed slightly forced. The Post had received a Pulitzer Prize for a news story that proved to be a work of fiction, and for a period of several days alarmed editorial writers in newspapers around the country felt called upon to defend the honor of the profession. Yes, it was true that the once glorious Post had defiled the holy places of journalism, and it was a terrible sight to behold, but let nobody think that such blasphemy had become habitual among the ladies and gentlemen of the fourth estate. No, no, said the collective editorial voice of the nation, we are good boys and girls; some of us are statesmen, and we never tell lies.

The offending story, a melodramatic account of an eight-year-old black child addicted to heroin, had been written by a young black reporter named Janet Cooke. It appeared on the front page of the *Post* in September of last year under the headline JIMMY'S WORLD. The boy was not further identified on the grounds that the reporter had promised to pro-

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tect her sources of information. When the editors of the Post legoned that Miss Cooke had received the Pulitzer Prize, they sent her notes of fond congratulation.

That was on Tuesday. Within twenty-four hours it was discovered that Miss Cooke had invented Jimmy. The boy was a composite figure, a fictional device pasted together out of Miss Cooke's notes in order to personify her impressions of drug addiction in the slum of southeast Washington. Her editors abruptly declared their praise inoperative. Benjamin Bradlee, the executive editor of the Post, characterized Miss Cooke as "a pathological liar," and compared her treachery to that of the infamous Richard Nixon.

The Post returned the prize, and on the Sunday after its disgrace the paper published an 18,000-word act of contrition written by its own ombudsman. The confession took up almost as much space as the news of the attempted assassination of a president, and the inflated self-importance of the writing (implying that the United States might relapse into barbarism because a newspaper had trifled with the facts) was characteristic of the "agony" suffered by the press as a whole. As might have been expected, it was The New York Times that achieved the most finely articulated tone of unctuousness. Every other reputable newspaper, said the Times (assuming without question its own comfortable place among the company of the elect), had sustained an affront to its dignity and loss of its credibility because "the fabricated event, the made-up quote, the fictitious source . . . debases communication, and democracy,'

On the heathen side of the reaction, people bearing grudges against the media expressed an ill-concealed delight in the Post's humiliation. Mr. Nixon was rumored to have smiled when told of the sham in Washington. Commodores of yacht clubs were reported to be gleefully beating their hands on tables. Here was proof of everything they had been saying for years about the contemptible falsehoods circulated by the media in the name of conscience. How apt that the Post should have been cast as the villain of the piece. It was the Post that had hounded poor Mr. Nixon out of the White House; it was the Post that had been memorialized in a Hollywood romance starring Dustin Hoffman and Robert Redford; it was the Post that embodied all Spiro Agnew had meant to imply about the sanctimonious hypocrisy of the liberal Eastern establishment. And now here was the Post passing off the counterfeit stuff of fiction as the coin of truth. God's will had been done, and to people envious or resentful of the media it was once

again possible to believe that justice had no vanished from the earth.

Ars longa, vita brevis

HETHER READING the high-minded explanations in the papers, of listening to the sermons of corporate vice presidents once griev ously wronged by a correspondent from News week, I noticed that relatively few people took the trouble to wonder about the nature of the media. They wished to assign to the newspapers and television networks an almost magical omnipotence, and it didn't occur to them that much of the information they received in the course of a week or a year-in newsletters. stock-market analysis, gossip, medical diagnosis, State Department announcements, scientific journals-sooner or later proved to be a figment of somebody's imagination. Within a few weeks of Miss Cooke's fall from grace, a columnist for the New York Daily News by the name of Michael Daly resigned his space because he had been accused of publishing a fraudulent report from Belfast, Mr. Daly apparently made use of quotations from a pseudonymous British gunner named "Christopher Spell" and then went on to pretend that he had been present when a British army patrol came under attack from Irish vouths throwing gasoline bombs. Michael J. O'Neill, the editor of the paper, deplored the use of what were called "questionable journalistic practices." Mr. Daly said that he had employed those techniques in "300 columns over two years."

The confusion about the media seems widely distributed, and maybe people need to be reminded that the media tell stories. There is nothing reprehensible about telling stories. Some are more complicated than others, Gibbon told a story, and so did Einstein, Almost everything presented in the theater of the news constitutes a kind of story, and to some extent all the principal players, whether identified as Henry Kissinger, Billy Martin, or Jean Harris, appear as composite figures, their quotations fitted into a context suitable to the occasion, their images made up of fragments as easily transposed as the bits and pieces of a mosaic or a documentary film. Less than six weeks after Jean Harris had gone to prison for killing Dr. Herman Tarnower, NBC made a television movie of her trial, with Ellen Burstyn in the part of an imagined Jean Harris.

The distinctions between the degrees of fabrication have less to do with the chicanery of editors than with the desires of an audience that pays for what it wants to hear and stands

illing to accept the conventions proper to s place and time. We are all engaged in the ame enterprise, all of us caught up in the taking of analogies and metaphors, all of us eeking evocations and representations of what re can recognize as appropriately human. tories move from truths to facts, not the other av around, and the tellers of tales endeavor convey the essence of a thing. Given the erspective of centuries and ten years to write book, the historian finds it hard enough to iscover the meaning of a single event. The ournalist usually has a few hours to write and he perspective of last week. Why then expect he poor fellow to revise the history of the vorld? Journalists have less in common with liplomats and soothsavers than they do with agabond poets.

Unfortunately for Mr. Daly and Miss Cooke, he literary conventions of the daily newspaper orbid the use of fictitious characters. It is permissible to rely on the anonymous source. .e., an informant who may or may not exist and who may or may not have said what the eporter eventually attributes to him in the paper. If a reporter telephones an acquainance at the Defense Department and asks for nformation about events in El Salvador or the state Department, the acquaintance can elect o speak "off the record." Protected by an nvisible cloak, the acquaintance can then rebeat as fact the gossip overheard the day before yesterday about Secretary Haig's wish to make himself emperor of all the Americas. The anonymous source thus moves even further offstage, and what appears in the next day's paper is a quotation of a quotation dressed up in the rubric of authority.

It is also permissible in a daily newspaper to sustain those myths that its audience wishes to believe. During the presidential campaign of 1976 the media wanted to believe that Jimmy Carter was a romantic figure embodying the rural virtues of the imaginary South. The media's belief reflected the wish of their audience. An influential audience in 1976 felt that the country needed to be pardoned for the sins committed in Vietnam and Washington. Who better to play the part of the redeemer than an unknown evangelist from Plains, Georgia? The media thoughtfully left out of its accounts those aspects of Mr. Carter's character that might have confused the image.

The conventional definitions of reality suffer little contradiction because the media have neither the resources nor the desire to prove them wrong. The connection between the use of drugs and the committing of crimes, for instance, rests on a mythopoeic interpretation of the facts; so do the conceptions of Real-

# "All the principal players, whether identified as Henry Kissinger, Billy Martin, or Jean Harris, appear as composite figures, their quotations fitted into a context suitable to the occasion."

politik and détente; so also do the explications of the Vietnam war, the justifications for profit and loss, the discussions of the grand abstraction known as the third world. Speaking through the personae of the appropriate officials, a newspaper can lend its voice to the pieties of the age. What it cannot do, at least not yet, is resort to such a crude device as the fabrication of a composite figure.

THER INSTRUMENTS of the media have been playing on the device at least since the early 1960s, with varying degrees of success. So many of the books and magazine articles of the last twenty years have been shaped out of an alloy of fact and fiction that even the libel lawyers have trouble separating the truth into its component elements. All the President's Men, a book written in part by Robert Woodward, Miss Cooke's metropolitan editor, introduced the character of "Deep Throat," a source of information otherwise unidentified, to whom the authors assigned quotations inimical to the interests of President Nixon. It is possible that the nom de presse represented an individual well placed within the White House at the time of the drama in question; it is also possible that the name served as a disguise for several informants. Given the mythical requirements of the year in which the book was published, it didn't much matter whether "Deep Throat" had descended to earth in the body of a man. People believed that he existed, and that was sufficient to the purposes of the moment.

For many years a substantial number of people believed that Carlos Castaneda had discovered a sorcerer in the Mexican desert and that his name was Don Juan. In 1966, Truman Capote published In Cold Blood, a book that he described as a nonfiction novel because he had rearranged the objects of scene and character in such a way as to improve the interior decor of what he called reality. Gail Sheehy established her reputation as an investigative reporter by writing a magazine



Lewis H. Lapham GILDING THE NEWS article about a prostitute and a pimp, both of them collages pasted together in much the same way that Janet Cooke made the pastiche of Jimmy. In David Halberstam's book The Best and the Brightest, few of the quotations from or about his cast of public men bear the weight of attribution. In 1977 Alex Haley won a Pulitzer Prize for Roots, a romance passing as history. In 1980 Norman Mailer won a Pulitzer Prize for The Executioner's Song, a supposedly factual account of Gary Gilmore's death, submitted to the prize committee as fiction.\*

None of these observations has anything to do with literary merit. They address the questions of technique. When I first went to work for the San Francisco Examiner in 1957, the oldest reporter in the city room occupied the desk next to mine, and I often marveled at the ease with which he wrote the accounts of routine catastrophe. In the drawer, with a bottle of bourbon and the manuscript of the epic poem he had been writing for twenty years, he kept a looseleaf notebook filled with stock versions of maybe fifty or sixty common newspaper texts. These were arranged in alphabetical order (fires; homicides; ship collisions; etc.) and then further divided into subcategories (fires-one-, two-, and three-alarm: warehouse: apartment building: etc.). The reporter had left blank spaces for the relevant names, deaths, numbers, and street addresses. As follows: "A---alarm fire swept through a-at-St. vesterday afternoon, killing -people and causing \$---in property damage.

At the Examiner in the late 1950s the corps of correspondents understood that what appeared in the paper constituted a kind of stage play in which cops, politicians, Russians, war heroes, and ladies of doubtful virtue all played traditional roles. The reporters further understood that the most satisfying stories (about the mayor's sexual perversities or the park commissioner's deal with the governor) never made the paper. Nobody objected to these omissions because it was assumed that the newspaper language still could more or less accurately portray the world of events. The disjunction between reality and its evocation gave the reporters a sense of their importance

of "being on the inside." In the absence of decent pay, the flattery compensated them for the work of writing pageants.

Truth is relative

HE CONVENTIONS changed in the early 1960s, shortly after the election of John F. Kennedy and the disappearance of what used to be called the avant-garde. Even in the spring of 1961, by which time I had come to New York as a reporter for the New York Herald Tribune, it was possible to take substantial liberties with the facts. The editor of that paper assigned me to the rewrite desk, and for nights on end I would listen to the wavering voices of correspondents at the other end of a bad phone connection in Algeria or the Congo, taking down dictation and then revising their texts in a way that conformed to the editor's expectations of the world.

On one occasion the Tribune's man in Moscow telephoned a dispatch about a meeting of the Soviet Academy of Sciences at which a few scientists had made a few inoffensive remarks about the uses of technology. My editor interpreted the dispatch to mean that First Secretary Nikita Khrushchev's initiatives toward détente had been defeated by the well-known militarists in the Politburo. He instructed me to seek guidance from a professor at Columbia University who knew enough about Russian affairs to explain why the meeting heralded the advent of World War III. (It is my distinct recollection that the professor was Zbigniew Brzezinski, but I cannot be sure of this, and I doubt whether Mr. Brzezinski would remember the conversation.) Once the professor understood what was wanted he supplied the missing explanation, and the story appeared on the front page of the next day's paper under a Moscow dateline.

I did the same with the news arriving over the phone from the paper's operatives in the metropolitan police bureaus, making notes about citizens found dead in cars or arrested for homicide. Almost always I was writing about people whom I had never seen, sometimes furnishing them with motives and characterizations at which I could only guess, arranging the acceptable abstractions of the day (cold war, missile gap, new frontier) into the equations of social or political meaning. I find myself doing the same thing in the writing of this essay. Never having met Miss Cooke, and not having read her portraval of Jimmy's World, I know only what I've read about her in the press, primarily the ombudsman's ac-

<sup>\*</sup> For the purposes of example I have mentioned only a few of the more well-known books of the last generation. The list could be extended through a long series of titles—books about the Bermuda Triangle or the secrets of the Pyramids, David Rorvik's clone, novels of espionage, The Spike, by Robert Moss and Arnaud de Borchgrave, the romans à clef by Harold Robbins and Irving Wallace, books about faith healers and mystics of various powers and denominations.

is columns in the Daily News. On at least ne level of meaning, I have only a formal or heoretical grasp of what I'm talking about; Aiss Cooke and Mr. Daly appear to me as haracters in a play of ideas. The same thing ould be said of most of the news from Poland r the White House.

Thus abstraction doth make theologians of s all, and we exhaust ourselves in passionate rguments about things that few of us have ver seen. We talk about the third world as f it were a real place rather than a convenient ymbol, about the gears of the national econmy as if they were as intelligible as the gears m a bicycle. People become lifelong enemies ecause they disagree about the military stratgy of the Soviet Union; on further investiation it generally turns out that neither antagmist speaks Russian or has been to Russia,

Within a year of President Kennedy's elecion the profession of journalism began to ecruit apprentices from Harvard and Yale. laving enjoyed the privileges of both afflunce and education, the new generation of ournalists felt inhibited by the older convenions. They thought of themselves as "creaive," as the possessors of "the truth" brought lown from Cambridge in bound volumes, as lovelists manqués, as the social equals of the politicians or popular celebrities about whom hey were obliged to make romances. At university they had been introduced to competing heories of reality, and they had heard rumors of discoveries in the sciences that called into mestion the structure of knowledge, reality, and matter. Apparently matter was a force that cohered, not a substance; physicists deduced he presence of subatomic particles, otherwise nvisible, by tracking their passage through a pubble chamber. Einstein's notion of relativity did to Newton's mechanics what Cubism had done to Impressionism, and it was conceivable that a man's perception of the universe depended on the intensity of his belief in that perception. If the techniques of literary criticism could be applied to the canon of weapons in Robert McNamara's Pentagon, then maybe the devices of literary fiction could be applied to the data bases of the news.

What came to be called "the new journalism" made its gaudy debut in the magazines -in New York, Esquire, Life, and the Saturday Evening Post. The form was not, in the strict sense, new. Time magazine had been contriving an artificial reality for years: so had the makers of newsreels and Hollywood epics. But the form seemed new when contrasted with the stodginess of the 1950s and

## ount in the Washington Post. Nor have I met "If the media succeed with their spectacles and grand simplifications. it is because their audiences define happiness as the state of being well and artfully deceived."

the old doctrine that journalism concerned itself only with facts.

HE TECHNIQUES of the new journalism had more in common with the making of documentary films than with the writing of novels. The writer seeks to make an image, not a work of art. He begins with an attitude of mind and a mass of random observations-notes on the weather; tones of voice; landscapes; fragments of conversation; bits and pieces of historical incident; descriptions of scene; impressions of character. These materials correspond to the film maker's unedited film or the raw information received every week by the newsmagazines. In order to impose a form on the chaos of his notes the writer decides on a premise and a point of view. He then can arrange the materials into a coherent design, as if he were fitting small stones into the pavement of a mosaic.\*

It was, after all, a scientific age, supposedly capable of subtle measurement and highly

\* The similarity of the new journalism and the documentary-film technique was made plain to me in the summer of 1974, when I was invited by NBC to consider the possibility of writing a film on the multinational oil companies. The price of oil had been going up, and the Arab states had combined into a cartel known as OPEC that apparently was making trouble. The network had collected, at huge expense, fifty or sixty hours of film on Armand Hammer, the chairman of Occidental Petroleum. The trouble was that the producers didn't know what the film meant. They had all these pictures -Armand Hammer in Los Angeles; Armand Hammer talking to Edwin Newman in a corporate jet somewhere over Poland; Armand Hammer at the Hermitage in Moscow; Armand Hammer with the Libvans: miscellaneous footage of oil tankers lying at anchor in New York harbor, refineries, the Persian Gulf. Arabs carrying hawks-but what in God's name was the story? Were the oil companies good or bad? Was Armand Hammer a scoundrel or the savior of Western civilization? What was the meaning of the Russian connection?

The producers had assembled the pieces of the puzzle, but without an image in mind, how were they going to put the pieces together into fifty-two minutes of coherent narrative? I didn't accept the offer, because I could foresee nothing but meetings.



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technical analysis. Truth-tellers of all descriptions stood in anxious need of clothing their figures in the lineaments of reality. Otherwise, who would listen to them? Novelists and sociologists borrowed the forms of the empirical sciences, dressing up their stories in the costumes of "case histories," forcing the narrative into whatever language would carry with it the impression of truth. It was not enough to have grasped the essence of a thing; it was necessary to give it an age, a name, an address, a set of circumstances.

Janet Cooke apparently had a talent for the genre, but so also did Gail Sheehy, Norman Mailer, and Hunter Thompson, Before writing her account of Jimmy's World she mentioned to her city editor that in traveling through southeast Washington she had been told of an eight-year-old boy addicted to heroin. "That's the story," said the city editor. "Go after it. It's a front-page story," Miss Cooke obliged, If she couldn't find the boy in question, she knew that such children had been reported to exist. She invented a plausible speech for the child (plausible, at least, to the editors of the Post), and she described in detail the furniture of an imaginary house. Her account was not too dissimilar from the travel writing that used to appear in National Geographic. The explorer goes to darkest Africa and returns with an amalgam of scientific and anecdotal observation—photographs of the explorer standing with his wife and pet dik-dik, published in conjunction with reports about what the animal has been known to do or what the witch doctor might have said.

The uses of the new journalism escape the blame of critics and the resentment of prize committees if the author makes it clear to the reader that he has violated the sanctities of the facts. This can be done either with a brief digression into the first person singular, with a summary statement of method, or with a tone of voice sufficiently unique to defy classification as that of a disembodied narrator. In the hands of the less accomplished practitioners, the devices of the new journalism serve the purposes of evasion, and it becomes possible to present a reality of one's own invention as if it corresponded to an objective description of events. The newsmagazines do this every week.

Several years ago a writer employed by *Time* published in *Harper's* an essay written almost entirely in the omniscient third person. Toward the end of the last paragraph the author permitted himself a conclusion and went so far as to write the words, "I think." When he saw the galley proofs of the article he was horrified by his recklessness, and he changed

the phrase to read "millions of people think."

Under the technical and epistemological pressures of the 1960s, the lines between fic tion and fact became increasingly difficult to distinguish. The previously distinct genres of journalism, literature, and theater graduall fused into something known as media. The amalgam of forms resulted in a national the ater of celebrity. If in 1965 the academic crit ics were beginning to notice that nobody wawriting serious plays, the literary critics observed that the novelists had wandered off into the wilderness of self. Who could compete with the continuous performance on the stage of events? Network television presented a troupe of celebrities transported with the ease of a Shakespearean scene change to Dallas Vietnam, Chicago, Vienna, Washington, and the Afghan frontier. The technical and light ing effects were astonishing, the verisimilitude of the characters so startling as to make them seem almost lifelike. By 1972 the tropes of the new journalism had become so common place that an anonymous writer for the Econ omist, a London weekly known for its recti tude, could begin his account of the American elections that year with the sentence, "It was raining in America on election day." The writer obviously didn't mean to say that it was raining everywhere in the United States He wished to say something about the state of mind of the American people, and he used the rain as a metaphor to express his intimations of doubt and melancholy.

A similar sleight of hand governs the use of quotation from the secretary of state, the chairman of the Chase Manhattan Bank, of any of the other players in the national repertory company. The writer already has in mind the shape of the story, but he needs to give it a plausible authority or office of origin. He cannot possibly depict the matter at hand in all of its complexity, and so he asks a question that will carry along the plot in the direction of melodrama. Would the secretary say that the reports of Syrian troops east of Beirut mean war or peace? Is it true, Mr. Rockefeller, that your bank sustains the racist economy of South Africa?

The actors experienced in the theater of the news know what the prompters want to hear. People drawn into the play for a single performance, usually as minor or supporting characters when their businesses collapse or their children commit suicide, never know what to say. They make the mistake of trying to explain, at some length and in boring detail, and they wonder why the account in the papers the next morning bears so little resemblance to their understanding of the facts.

F THE MEDIA SUCCEED with their spectacles and grand simplifications, it is because their audiences define happiness as the state of being well and artfully deceived. People like to listen to stories, to believe what they're told, to imagine that the implacable forces of history speak to them with a human voice. Who can bear to live without myths? If people prefer to believe that drug addiction causes crime, that may be because they would rather not think that perfectly ordinary people commit crimes, people not too different from themselves, people living in the same neighborhoods and sending their children to the same schools.

The media thus play the part of the courtier, reassuring their patrons that the world conforms to the wish of the presiding majority. The media advertise everything and nothing. Yes, say the media, our generals know what they're doing (no, say the media, our generals are fools); the energy crisis was brought down on our innocent heads by the Arabs (the energy crisis is the fault of our profligacy and greed); Vietnam was a crusade (Vietnam was imperialism); homosexuality is a "lifestyle" (homosexuality is a disease); the Kennedys were demigods (the Kennedys were beasts); the state is invincible (the state has lost its nerve); yes, Virginia, there is a reality out there, and not only can it be accurately described but also it looks just the way you always wanted it to look.

By telling people what they assume they already know, the media reflect what society wants to think of itself. The images in the mirror compose the advertisement for reality. Janet Cooke's story received a Pulitzer Prize because it confirmed what the committee, most of whose members were both ambitious and white, wished to believe about people who were alienated and black. If blacks were lost to heroin at the age of eight, how could they mount a revolution? We are safe, my dear Trevor, for at least another generation.

Although notoriously inept at the art of disguise, the FBI agents dressed up to look like Arabs succeeded in their charade against the congressmen filmed in the ABSCAM screenings because the congressmen wanted to believe that a sheik was somebody in a robe who had nothing better to do than bestow \$50,000 in cash on the princes of Christendom.

The simplicities of the media enjoy the further advantage of a much vaunted "communications revolution" that has had the paradoxical effect of lowering the norm of literacy.

# "Novelists and sociologists borrowed the forms of the empirical sciences, dressing up their stories in the costumes of 'case histories,' forcing the impression of truth."

The immense increase of available information over the last generation has so fragmented the literate audience that instead of bringing people together the sophistication of the new technologies has forced them further apart and deprived them of the capacity to speak a common language. As recently as 1960 there was such a thing in the United States as a fairly unified field of informed opinion. More or less the same people read more or less the same newspapers and magazines. They comprised an educated audience that was still small enough to talk to itself and that could agree, at least in rough outline, as to the country's history, character, and hope of the future.

After 1965, this single audience dispersed into a thousand audiences, each of them preoccupied with its own interests and realities, each of them speaking the jargon of a particular speciality or profession. The diaspora followed, in part, from the rise in the population after the Second World War and the subsequent multiplication of graduates of the nation's universities during the 1960s; in part, the diaspora reflected the wealth and dynamism of a society that could afford to pursue so many lines of random inquiry.

Who now can make sense of the surfeit of information? Even a middle-level executive at a middle-level brokerage firm receives 500 household advisories a week (not to mention subscriptions to trade journals, the daily and financial press); dossiers of equivalent bulk circulate at every level of authority within the corridors of any American institution large enough to boast of its presence in the twentieth century. What then must be the data base provided for the officials holding the higher places in a bureaucracy the size of the State or Treasury departments? Who has the time to read what they have to read?

The more people know, the less they know. To the extent that society as a whole expands and complicates its acquisition of knowledge, so the individual members of society find less and less to say to one another on any level of meaning beyond the reach of Mike Wallace.



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They escape the burden of their anxieties by retreating into the magic shows of the national celebrity theater. The gaudiness of the television spectacle, which so obviously shifts the weight of personality against the subtlety of mind, imposes a kind of numb silence on people who might otherwise have had something useful to say.

N THE AUTUMN of 1977. I taught a seminar at Yale on the art of the press, and I noticed that of the eighteen students in the class five or six of them hoped to make careers in journalism; they were as ambitious as Janet Cooke, and their questions about Peter Zenger and the First Amendment served as preambles to requests for an introduction to a deputy editor at The New York Times. The other students in the class paid relatively little attention to the media. Their interest was that of an anthropologist or a student of comparative mythology. The media presented them with portraits of reality they thought inauthentic, a reality of a kind, but one without the dimension of insight or wisdom. Brought up with the wonders of the communications revolution, they somehow understood that the news had moved out of the newspapers. If, in the 1930s, Bernard Baruch could speculate in the financial markets on the basis of what he read in the Times, by the late 1960s anybody who wanted seriously to follow events (whether in finance, foreign affairs, or the sciences) had to depend on more detailed sources of information.

Janet Cooke, like Michael Daly and the generation of correspondents raised on the principles of the new journalism, understood that the media had become a theater. Apparently she wanted to be a star, and the résumés she submitted both to the Post and then to the Pulitzer Prize committee read like the list of credits that producers receive from unemployed actors. I've never yet met an actor who, when trying out for a part, doesn't answer yes to every question asked. Can he sing? Like Sinatra, Can he dance? Like Astaire, Does he know languages? His mother was French. Thus, when applying for a job at the Post, Miss Cooke conferred on herself a degree from Vassar and a fluency in French and Spanish. Her advertisement to the Pulitzer Prize committee was further elaborated with a graduate degree from the University of Toledo, a year's study at the Sorbonne, and a fluency in Italian and Portuguese. It was this pathetic forgery of her life, not the fabrication of her story in the paper, that led to the discovery of her fraud.

If Miss Cooke had not won the Pulitzer Prize, perhaps the journalists who condemned her, both inside and outside of the Post, would not have been so harsh in their judgments. When Mr. Daly resigned from the Daily News. effectively pleading nolo contendere to the charge of having faked a dispatch from Belfast, nobody felt obliged to denounce him as a pathological liar and a disgrace to the profession. But the Pulitzer Prize is not something to be trifled with: like the Academy Award, it denotes grandeur, "Applause," remarked Ambrose Bierce, "is the echo of a platitude," and even a brief study of the Pulitzer Prizes awarded over a period of years suggests that they sustain the passions of the moment. Thus William Styron receives a prize for The Confessions of Nat Turner in 1968. at just about the point in time when sentiment on behalf of civil rights had become thoroughly respectable: Frances FitzGerald wins a prize for Fire in the Lake in 1973, by which time it had become correct to bemoan the American presence in Vietnam: Herman Wouk wins a prize for The Caine Mutiny in 1952. when the country was far enough into the cold war to think that naval officers showed virtue and maturity by obeying the orders of a demented captain.

If the prizes raise the politically expedient into the realm of authority and beauty, so also they maintain the pomp and majesty of a profession constantly in need of reassurance. The ladies and gentlemen of the fourth estate know that they have been living beyond their moral and intellectual means, and their desire to establish themselves as a social class reflects their anxiety about being discovered as bankrupts. The prizes might impress the groundlings on the public side of the curtain, but within the profession they shore up the confidence of the younger members of the troupe who might otherwise begin to question the validity of their claims to privilege. The continued credibility of the press, not to mention its hope of profit, rests on the popular belief that it deals in the currency of fact. If the reality of the press were seen to be as arbitrary as that of the government or the Mobil Oil Corporation, what would happen then? No wonder Miss Cooke was driven from the temple,

followed by stones.

HE CUSTODIANS of the press undoubtedly have a point. As has been said, people like to believe in myths, and the extravagance of the libel awards recently bestowed on Carol Burnett and a former Miss Wyoming suggests that the au-

about Miss Burnett in a Washington restaurant with Henry Kissinger. The gossip was false, as is most gossip published in even the most reputable of newspapers, but a jury in Los Angeles awarded Miss Burnett \$1.3 million in punitive damages, a sum equivalent to half the Enquirer's assets. The former Miss Wyoming claimed that a work of fiction published in Penthouse magazine (a story about an imaginary Miss Wyoming) caused her immeasurable suffering and embarrassment, and a jury in Chevenne presented her with \$12.5 million.

The disproportionate levy of punishment further suggests that people may expect too much of journalism. Not only do they expect it to be entertaining, they expect it to be true. It isn't so much that people insist on believing in the accuracy of the media (the Enquirer, after all, regularly announces cures for cancer and sightings of UFOs); the mistakes and distortions they will forgive if they can retain their faith in the underlying honesty of the enterprise. But once let them suspect that the difference between fact and fiction may be as random as a number drawn in a lottery, and their resentment will wreak an expensive vengeance. More than once I have heard the media described as "an army of occupation," and Congress has been besieged with bills offering redefinitions of the liberties granted under the First Amendment.

Once there was a religious theater in which God staged cataclysmic floods, plagues, and heavenly fires with the effortless aplomb of ABC's "Wide World of Sports." Now that God has been pronounced dead, it is conceivable that people would like to transfer His powers and dominions to the media. What else do they have to put in His place? To a large extent the media have had the roles of judge and inquisitor thrust upon them because so many other institutions have proved themselves inadequate to the tasks of omniscience. The media disguise their lack of knowledge with the quality of knowingness, their weakness with the power to forge the metal of celebrity and transmute a political issue into a salable commodity.

If the individual can be flattered into believing that he is present at all important public occasions, he may also be tricked into believing that he has no story of his own. The man who substitutes what Saul Bellow once called the nonstory of the news for the line of his own narrative condemns himself to an unending contemplation of the images that crowd across the media's many mirrors, a man for-

# dience has begun to grow restive. The Na- "Janet Cooke, like Michael Daly and the generation of correspondents raised on the principles of the new journalis understood that the media had become

ever suspended in the revolving light-show of names, issues, events, votes, hearings, treaties, wars, scandals, and final scores. The resulting loss of identity leads to the familiar chronicle of confused conflict, which in turn can be reprocessed into tomorrow's broadcast or next year's best-selling murder.



HE HUGE IMAGO of the media expands in a vacuum, and before it engulfs all other forms of authority, it might be useful to ask what is meant by the old proverb about truth making men free. If people seek knowledge in the hope that it will grant them freedom and power, and if the media can satisfy neither of those desires, maybe that is because the customers expect the media to include those favors in the price of admission. The truth unfortunately has to be discovered every day, by each individual working with the tools of his own thought, imagination, and patient study. If we are all engaged in the same endeavor, seeking the representations of the truly human, then probably we should not assign so much belief to the contrived mythologies of the media. In the same editorial in which it admonished the Washington Post, The New York Times expressed the complacent notion that "great publications magnify beyond measure the voice of any single writer." This is not quite accurate. The instruments of the media multiply or amplify a voice, serving much the same purpose as a loudspeaker in a ball park or a prison. The amplification leaches the soul out of the voice, squeezing it into the institutional sound that pays the enormous costs of the big media. What magnifies a voice is its human character-its compassion, honesty, and moral intelligence. The great institutions of the day did everything they could to suppress the voice of Thomas Paine's Rights of Man; so also did the resident authorities try to muffle the voices of Freud and Marx and Christ. The human voice ceaselessly renews itself, evolving into the future with a force far greater than that of the old magic shows.

HARPER'S JULY 1981

# FROM BAUHAUS TO OUR HOUSE

Architecture for architects only

by Tom Wolfe

The story so far: Always obedient colonials when it came to style, American architects were bowled over in the 1920s by the European avant-garde fashion of Bauhaus architecture. The fact that the Bauhaus style developed out of the ruins of Germany after the First World War, in the name of socialism, and with the ideal of creating Perfect Worker Housing—i.e., in a setting that bore no resemblance to the United States—didn't matter in

the slightest. When the Silver Prince himself, Walter Gropius, head of the Bauhaus, fled Germany and arrived at Harvard in the 1930s, he and many of his Bauhaus comrades were received like white gods come from the sky. The course of American architecture changed overnight. For the next thirty years American architecture—of every sort—would be based on designs and concepts devised for German worker housing in the 1920s.

#### I. Escape to Islip

ERE WE COME UPON one of the ironies of American life in the twentieth century. After all, this has been the American century, in the same way that the seventeenth might be regarded as the British century. This is the century in which America, the young giant, became the mightiest nation on earth, devising the means to obliterate the planet with a single device but also the means to escape to the stars and explore the rest of the universe. This is the century in which she became the richest nation in all of history, with a wealth that reached down to every level of the population. The

energies and animal appetites and idle pleasures of even the working classes-the very term now seemed antique-became enormous, lurid, creamy, preposterous. The American family car was a 425-horsepower, twenty-twofoot-long Buick Electra with tail fins in back and two black rubber breasts on the bumper in front. The American liquor-store deliveryman's or cargo humper's vacation was two weeks in Barbados with his third wife or his new cookie. The American industrial convention was a gin-blind rout at a municipal coliseum the size of all Rome featuring vans in the parking lot stocked with hookers on flokati rugs for the exclusive use of registered members of the association. The way Americans lived made the rest of mankind stare with envy or disgust but always with awe. In short,

This is the second part of a two-part article.

Tom Wolfe's most recent book, In Our Time, was published in 1980 by Farrar, Straus and Giroux. this has been America's Elizabethan era, her Bourbon Louis romp, her season of the rising sap-and what architecture has she to show for it? An architecture whose tenets prohibit every manifestation of exuberance, power, empire, grandeur, or even high spirits and playfulness, as the height of bad taste.

We brace for a barbaric vawp over the roofs of the world-and hear a cough at a concert. In short, the reigning architectural style in this, the very Babylon of capitalism, became worker housing. Worker housing, as developed by a handful of architects, inside the compounds, amid the rubble of Europe in the early 1920s, was now pitched up high and wide, in the form of Ivy League art-gallery annexes, museums for art patrons, apartments for the rich, corporate headquarters, city halls, country estates. It was made to serve every purpose, in fact, except housing for workers.

It was not that worker housing was never built for workers. In the 1950s and early 1960s the federal government helped finance the American version of the Dutch and German Siedlungen of the 1920s. Here they were called public housing projects. But somehow the workers, intellectually undeveloped as they were, managed to avoid public housing. They called it, simply, "the projects," and they avoided it as if it had a smell. The workers -if by workers we mean people who have iobs-headed out instead to the suburbs. They ended up in places like Islip, Long Island, and the San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles, and they bought houses with pitched roofs and shingles and clapboard siding, with no structure expressed if there was any way around it, with gaslight-style front-porch lamps and mailboxes set up on lengths of stiffened chain that seemed to defy gravity—the more cute or antiquey touches the better-and they loaded these houses with "drapes" such as baffled all description and wall-to-wall carpet you could lose a shoe in, and they put barbecue pits and fishponds with concrete cherubs urinating into them on the lawn out back, and they parked the Buick Electras out front and had Evinrude cruisers up on tow trailers in the carport just beyond the breezeway.

As for the honest sculptural objects designed for worker-housing interiors, such as Mies' and Breuer's chairs, the proles either ignored them or held them in contempt because they were patently uncomfortable. This furniture is today a symbol of wealth and privilege, attuned chiefly to the tastes of the businessmen's wives who graze daily at the D & D Building, the major interior-decoration bazaar in New York. Mies' most famous piece of furniture design, the Barcelona chair, retails today for \$3,465 and is available only through decorators. The "In short, the high price is due in no small part to the chair's worker-housing honest nonbourgeois materials: stainless steel and leather. Today the leather can be ordered only in black or shades of brown. In the early 1970s, it seems, certain bourgeois elements were having them made in the most appalling variations ... zebra skin. Holstein skin, ocelot skin, and pretty fabrics.

The only people left trapped in worker housing in America today are those who don't work at all and are on welfare-these are the sole inhabitants of "the projects"-and, of course, the urban rich who live in places such as the Olympic Tower on Fifth Avenue in New York. Since the 1950s the term "luxury highrise" has come to denote a certain type of apartment house that is in fact nothing else but the Siedlungen of Stuttgart, Berlin, and Zehlendorf, with units stacked up thirty, forty, fifty stories high, to be rented or sold to the bourgeoisie. Which is to say, pure nonbourgeois housing for the bourgeoisie only. Sometimes the towers are of steel, concrete, and glass; sometimes of glass, steel, and small glazed white or beige bricks. Always the ceilings are low, often under eight feet, the hallways are narrow, the rooms are narrow, even when they're long, the bedrooms are small (Le Corbusier was always in favor of that), the walls are thin, the doorways and windows have no casings, the joints have no moldings, the walls have no baseboards, and the windows don't open, although small vents or jalousies may be provided. The construction is invariably cheap in the pejorative as well as the literal sense. That builders could present these boxes in the 1950s, without a twitch of the nostril, as luxury, and that well-educated men and women could accept them, without a blink, as luxury—here is objective testimony, from those too dim for irony, to the aesthetic sway of the compound aesthetic, of the Silver Prince and his colonial legions, in America following the Second World War.

VERY RESPECTED instrument of architectural opinion and cultivated taste, from Domus to House & Garden, told the urban dwellers of America that this was living. This was the good taste of today; this was modern, and soon the International Style became known simply as modern architecture. Every Sunday, in its design section, The New York Times Magazine ran a picture of the same sort of apartment. I began to think of it as that apartment. The walls were always pure white and free of moldings, reigning architectural style . . . became worker housing."

casings, baseboards, and all the rest. In the living room there were about 17,000 watts' worth of R-40 spotlights encased in white canisters suspended from the ceiling in what is known as track lighting. There was always a set of bentwood chairs, designed by Le Corbusier, which no one ever sat in because they caught you in the small of the back like a karate chop. The dining room table was a smooth slab of blond wood (no ogee edges. no beading on the legs), around which was a set of the S-shaped, tubular steel, canebottomed chairs that Mies van der Rohe had designed—the second most famous chair designed in the twentieth century, his own Barcelona chair being first, but also one of the five most disastrously designed, so that by the time the main course arrived, at least one guest had pitched face forward into the lobster bisque. Somewhere nearby was a palm or a dracena fragrans or some other huge tropical plant, because all the furniture was so lean and clean and bare and spare that without some prodigious piece of frondose Victoriana from the nursery the place looked absolutely empty. The photographer always managed to position the plant in the foreground, so that the stark scene beyond was something one peered at through an arabesque of equatorial greenery. (And that apartment is still with us, every Sunday.)

So what if you were living in a building that looked like a factory and felt like a factory, and paying top dollar for it? Every modern building of quality looked like a factory. That was the look of today. You only had to think of Mies' campus for the Illinois Institute of Technology, most of which had gone up in the 1940s. The main classroom building looked



Drawing by Rowland B. Wilson; © 1965 The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.

like a shoe factory. The chapel looked like a power plant. The power plant itself, also designed by Mies, looked rather more spiritual (as Charles Jencks would point out), thanks to its chimney, which reached heavenward at least. The School of Architecture building had black steel trusses rising up through the roof on either side of the main entrance, after the manner of a Los Angeles car wash. All four were glass and steel boxes. The truth was, this was inescapable. The compound style, with its nonbourgeois taboos, had so reduced the options of the true believer that every building, the beach house no less than the skyscraper, was bound to have the same general

And so what? The terms glass box and repetitious, first uttered as terms of opprobrium, became badges of honor. Mies had many American imitators, Philip Johnson, I. M. Pei, and Gordon Bunshaft being the most famous and the most unabashed. And the most unashamed. Snipers would say that every one of Philip Johnson's buildings was an imitation of Mies van der Rohe, And Johnson would open his eyes wide and put on his marvelous smile of mock innocence and reply, "I have always been delighted to be called Mies van der Johnson," Bunshaft had designed Lever House, corporate headquarters for the Lever Brothers soap and detergent company, on Park Avenue. The building was such a success that it became the prototype for the American glass box, and Bunshaft and his firm, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, did many variations on this same design. To the charge that glass boxes were all he designed, Bunshaft liked to crack: "Yes, and I'm going to keep on doing boxes until I do one I like."

For a hierophant of the compound, confidence came easy! What did it matter if they said you were imitating Mies or Gropius or Corbu or any of the rest? It was like accusing a Christian of imitating Jesus Christ.

In 1958, the greatest single monument to the architecture of the Dutch and German compounds went up on Park Avenue, across the street from Lever House. This was the Seagram Building, designed by Mies himself, with Philip Johnson as his assistant. The Seagram Building was worker housing, utterly nonbourgeois, pitched up thirty-eight stories on Park Avenue for the firm that manufactured a rye whiskey called Four Roses. In keeping with the color of the American whiskey bottle, the glass for this greatest of all boxes of glass and steel was tinted brownish amber. When it came to the exposed steel-well, since brownish steel didn't exist, except in a state of rust, bronze was chosen. Wasn't this adding a color, like poor Bruno Taut? No, bronze was bronze; that was the way it came, right out of the foundry. As for the glass, all glass ended up with a tint of some sort, usually greenish. Tinting it brown was only a machine-made tint control. Right? (Besides, this was Mies.) Exposing the metal had presented a problem. Mies' vision of ultimate nonbourgeois purity was a building composed of nothing but steel beams and glass, with concrete slabs creating the ceilings and floors. But now that he was in the United States, he ran into American building and fire codes. Steel was terrific for tall buildings because it could withstand great lateral stresses as well as support great weights. Its weakness was that the heat of a fire could cause steel to buckle. American codes required that structural steel members be encased in concrete or some other fireproof material. That slowed Mies up for only a little while. He had already worked it out in Chicago, in his Lake Shore apartment buildings. What you did was enclose the steel members in concrete, as required, and then reveal them, express them, by sticking vertical WF-beams (wide-flange) on the outside of the concrete, as if to say: "Look! Here's what's inside." But sticking things on the outside of buildings . . . Wasn't that exactly what was known, in another era, as applied decoration? Was there any way you could call such a thing functional? No problem. At the heart of functional, as everyone knew, was not function but the spiritual quality known as nonbourgeois. And what could be more nonbourgeois than an unadorned WF-beam, straight out of the mitts of a construction worker?

The one remaining problem was window curtains. Mies would have preferred that the great windows of plate glass have no curtains at all. Unless you could compel everyone in a building to have the same color curtains (white or beige, naturally) and raise them and lower them or open and shut them at the same time and to the same degree, they always ruined the purity of the design of the exterior. In the Seagram Building, Mies came as close as man was likely to come to realizing that ideal. No tenant could add curtains. He could only use curtains built into the building, and there were only three intervals where they would stay put: open, closed, and halfway. At any other point they just kept sliding.

No intellectually undeveloped impulses, please. By now this had become a standard attitude among compound architects in America. They policed the impulses of clients and tenants alike. Even after the building was up and the contract fulfilled, they would return. The imitators of Le Corbusier—and there were

many-would build expensive country houses "No intellectuin wooded glades patterned on Corbu's Villa Savoie, with strict instructions that the bedrooms, being on the upper floor and visible only to the birds, have no curtains whatsoever. Tired of waking up at 5 A.M. every morning to the light of the summer sun, the owners would add white curtains. But the soul engineer would inevitably return and rip the offending rags down . . . and throw out those sweet little puff 'n' clutter Thai-silk throw pillows in the living room while he was at it.

In the great corporate towers, the office workers shoved filing cabinets, desks, wastepaper baskets, potted plants, up against the floor-to-ceiling sheets of glass, anything to build a barrier against the panicked feeling that they were about to pitch headlong into the streets below. Above these jerry-built walls they strung up makeshift curtains that looked like laundry lines from the slums of Naples. anything to keep out that brain-boiling, poached-eve sunlight that came blazing in every afternoon... And by night the custodial staff, the Miesling police, under strictest orders, invaded and pulled down these pathetic barricades thrown up against the pure vision of the white gods and the Silver Prince. Eventually everyone gave up and learned, like the haute bourgeoisie above him, to take it like a man.

ally undeveloped impulses. please."



Gordon Bunshaft's Lever House, the mother of all the glass boxes. She was as fecund as the shad.



or EVEN the bottom dogs, those on welfare, trapped in the projects, have taken it so supinely. The lumpenproles have fought to ut with the legions of the

Silver Prince, and they have won a battle or two. In 1955 a vast worker-housing project called Pruitt-Igoe was opened in St. Louis. The design, by Minoru Yamasaki, architect of the World Trade Center, won an award from the American Institute of Architects Vamasaki designed it classically Corbu, fulfilling the master's vision of highrise hives of steel, glass, and concrete separated by open spaces of green lawn. The workers of St. Louis, of course, were in no danger of getting caught in Pruitt-Igoe. They had already decamped for suburbs such as Spanish Lake and Crestwood, Pruitt-Igoe filled up mainly with recent migrants from the rural south. They moved from areas of America where the population density was fifteen to twenty folks per square mile, where one rarely got more than ten feet off the ground except by climbing a tree, into Pruitt-Igoe's fourteenstory blocks.

On each floor there were covered walkways. in keeping with Corbu's idea of "streets in the air." Since there was no other place in the project in which to sin in public, whatever might ordinarily have taken place in bars, brothels, social clubs, pool halls, amusement arcades, general stores, corncribs, rutabaga patches, havricks, barn stalls, now took place in the streets in the air. Corbu's boulevards made Hogarth's Gin Lane look like the oceanside street of dreams in Southampton, New York. Respectable folk pulled out, even if it meant living in cracks in the sidewalks. Millions of dollars and scores of commission meetings and task-force projects were expended in a lastditch attempt to make Pruitt-Igoe habitable, In 1971, the final task force called a general meeting of everyone still living in the project.

They asked the residents for their suggestions. It was a historic moment for two reasons. One, for the first time in the fifty-year history of worker housing, someone had finally asked the client for his two cents' worth. Two, the chant. The chant began immediately: "Blow it ... up! Blow it ... up! Bl

That part of the worker-housing saga has not ended. It has just begun. At almost the same time that Pruitt-Igoe went down, the Oriental Gardens project went up in New Haven. the model city of urban renewal in America. The architect was one of America's most prestigious compound architects, Paul Rudolph, dean of the Yale school of architecture. The federal government's Department of Housing and Urban Development, which was paying for the project, hailed Rudolph's daring design as the vision of the housing projects of the future. The Oriental Gardens were made of clusters of prefabricated modules. You would never end up with more disadvantaged people than you bargained for. You could keep adding modules and clustering the poor vobboes up until they reached Bridgeport. The problem was that the modules didn't fit together too well. In through the cracks came the cold and the rain. Out the doors, the ones that still opened, went whatever respectable folks had gone in in the first place. By September of 1980 there were only seventeen tenants left. Five months ago the HUD itself began returning the Oriental Gardens' nonbiodegradable plastic modules to the free-floating molecular state from whence they came. They set about demolishing it.

### II. Silver-white, Silver-gray

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S HE TOLD the story, Edward Durell Stone, one of the earliest of the International Style architects in America, boarded an airplane from New York to

an airplane from New York to Paris one night in 1953 and found himself sitting next to a woman named Maria Elena Torchio. Her father was an Italian architect; her mother was from Barcelona; and Maria, Stone liked to say, was "explosively Latin." He fell in love with her over the Atlantic and proposed to her over the English Channel. She didn't fall so fast. For a start, she thought his clothes looked like a college professor's. She wasn't wild about his buildings, either. Very

The Pruitt-Igoe projects, St. Louis, July 15, 1972. Mankind finally arrives at a workable solution to the problem of public housing.



careful buildings, they were, very restrained, a bit cold, a bit lifeless, if the truth were known...not very explosively Latin...

In 1954 Stone married Maria Elena Torchio and created the luxurious and ornamental design of the American Embassy in New Delhi, with its terrazzo grilles of concrete and marble, its steel columns finished with gold leaf, its water garden traversed by curvilinear islands, isles, and islets. He thought of the embassy as his "Taj Maria." What happened to Stone in the architectural world after the unveiling of the Taj—gold leaf?—gives us a picture of the other side of compound passion. It shows us the fate of the apostate.

Stone was the man who had designed the first International Style house built on the East Coast, the Mandel House in Mount Kisco, New York, in 1933. (An Austrian emigré, Richard Neutra, had built one in Los Angeles, the Lovell House, in 1928.) In 1934 Stone built his second International Style house in Mount Kisco, the Kowalski House, and the community rose up and changed the local building codes to put an end to the baffling infestation. So far, so good; a little flushing out of the philistines served one well in the compound. Stone's credentials were so impeccable, in fact, that the Museum of Modern Art chose him as architect, along with Philip L. Goodwin, for its building on West Fifty-third Street, just off Fifth Avenue, on a site where the townhouses of both John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and John D. Himself had stood. Here would be the museum's own exemplary building to show all New York the International Style. Stone had

been chosen to devise the object lesson, the "The fate of the very flagship, of Utopia, Ltd.

The moment the New Delhi embassy was unveiled. Stone was dropped like an embezzler by le monde of fashionable architecture, which is to say, the university-based world of the European compounds. Gold here and luxurious there and marbled and curvilinear everywhere ... How very bour- No, it was bourgeois ne plus ultra. There was no way that even Mies himself, master of the bronze I-beam, could have argued his way out of a production like this one. What made it more galling was that Stone didn't even try. He kissed off the International Style, To critics of his Kennedy Center in Washington, a vastly enlarged version of his Taj Maria, Stone retorted that it represented "twenty-five hundred years of Western culture rather than twenty-five years of modern architecture." The man was not even a backslider. He was an apostate pure and simple. He had renounced the fundamental principles.

The fate of the apostate, classically, is that curse known as anathema. Within the world of architecture, among those in a position to build or dismantle reputations, every building Stone did thereafter was buried in anathematism. When the Museum of Modern Art decided to build an addition on West Fifty-third Street, there was not one chance in a thousand that Stone was going to be chosen to add to his own building. The job went to the most fashionable of all the American compound architects, Philip Johnson, now a graduate of the Harvard school of architecture, albeit still

"The fate of the apostate, classically, is that curse known as anathema,"





The Two Stones. 1939: Edward Durell Stone, true believer, does the Museum of Modern Ari's building. 1964: Edward Durell Stone, apostate, does Huntington Hartford's Gallery of Modern Art. "Marble Lollipops!" screamed the true believers.

at the feet of the Silver Prince. In one of American art history's nicer turns of plot, Stone was chosen instead by Huntington Hartford to design his Gallery of Modern Art nine blocks away at Columbus Circle, Hartford was a mayerick on the art scene, a collector of the Pre-Raphaelites and Salvador Dali, to mention but two of his unfashionable tastes. He was building his museum specifically to challenge Utopia, Ltd., and all its works. I can remember vividly the automatic sniggers. the rolling of the eyeballs, that mention of Stone's building for Hartford set off at that time. The reviews of the architectural critics were had enough. But not even such terms as "Kitsch for the rich" and "Marble Lollipops" convey the poisonous mental atmosphere in which Stone now found himself. He was reduced, at length, to saying things such as, "Every taxi driver in New York will tell you it's his favorite building," After so much! after a lifetime!-to be hounded, finally, to the last populist refuge of a Mickey Spillane or a Jacqueline Susann . . . O Lord! Anathema!

One will note that Stone's business did not collapse following his apostasy, merely his prestige. The Taj Maria did wonders for his practice in a commercial sense. After all, the International Style was well hated even by those who commissioned it. There were still others ready to go to considerable lengths not to have to deal with it in the first place. They

were happy enough to find an architect with modernist credentials, even if they had lapsed, who was willing to give them something else. But in terms of his reputation within the fraternity, Stone was poison. He was beyond serious consideration. He had removed himself from the court. He was out of the game.

Eero Saarinen's experience was similar, although the hostility was not nearly so virulent. Saarinen was of noble modernist-architecture lineage. His father, Eliel, was a Finnish architect often compared to the Vienna Secessionists. Saarinen had been a conventional International Style architect until 1956, when he designed the Trans World Airlines terminal at Idlewild Airport (now Kennedy) in New York. The building was made of the conventional materials, glass, steel, and concrete, but it looked unmistakably like . . . an eagle. His Dulles Airport building in Washington was an even more flamboyant bird-in-flight sculpture with pagoda overtones . . . His Ingalls ice-hockev rink at Yale looked like a whale or a turtle. (Not the first animals that ice hockey might bring to mind, but so be it.) In Saarinen's case, the curvilinear shapes were the least of it. The man had lapsed into some sort of Hindu zoomorphism. Saarinen had decided to go his own way, in a frank bid to become the unique genius of twentieth-century architecture. He said he would like "a place in architectural history," He had picked the wrong era. There were geniuses in architecture, but they could not be unique. They had to be part of a compound, part of a "consensus," to use one of Mies' terms. The world of the compounds simply watched him disappear into the zoomorphic swamp mists. He was seldom attacked directly, the way Stone was. He was shut out from serious consideration, and that was that, I can remember writing a piece for the magazine Architecture Canada in which I mentioned Saarinen in terms usually reserved for architects worthy of study. I ran into one of New York's best-known architectural writers at a party, and he took me aside for some fatherly advice.

"I enjoyed your piece," he said, "and I agreed with your point, in principle. But I have to tell you that you are only hurting your own cause if you use Saarinen as an example. People just won't take you seriously. I mean, Saarinen..."

I wish there were some way I could convey the look on his face. It was that cross between a sneer and a shrug that the French are so good at, the look that says the subject is so outré, so infra dig, so de la boue, one can't even spend time analyzing it without having some of the rubbish rub off.

The winged roof of Eero Saarinen's Dulles International Airport and the eagle shape of his TWA terminal infuriated modernists. Originality in design had become a cardinal sin, as in the same of the work of the





The principle illustrated by the Saarinen ase was: no architect could achieve a major eputation outside the compounds, which were low centered in the universities. The architect who insisted on going his own way stood no hance of being hailed as a pioneer of some mportant new direction. At best, he could lope to be regarded as an eccentric, like saarinen or the Oklahoma architects Bruce Goff and Herbert Greene, (Oklahoma wasn't on terrific a vantage point in the first place.) At worst he would be the apostate, covered in mathema, like Stone.

TONE AND SAARINEN, like Frank Lloyd Wright and Goff and Greene, were too American, which meant both too parochial (not part of the International Style) and too bourgeois. Somehow they acually catered to the Hog-stomping Baroque exuberance of American civilization. When Stone designed the Kennedy Center in Washngton with a lobby six stories high and six nundred and thirty feet long-so big, as one ournalist pointed out, that Mickey Mantle's mightiest home run would have been just another long fly ball—it was regarded as an obscenity. Stone was actually playing up to American megalomania. He was encouraging the barbaric yawps. He was glorifying The Client's own grandiose sentiments.

It was difficult to say all this in so many words, of course. Hence the shrugs and that look, which still flourishes today. How else to deal with the barbaric yawps of the major hotel architects, such as Morris Lapidus and John Portman? Probably no architects ever worked harder to capture the spirit of American wealth and glamour after the Second World War than these two men: Lapidus, with his Americana and Eden Roc hotels in Miami Beach; Portman, with his Hyatts all across the country. Their work was so striking and so large in scale it was impossible for their fellow architects to ignore it. So they gave it that look. Portman received the shrug and that look. Lapidus received that look and a snigger.

Lapidus had started off his career in the theater and had gone to Columbia to study architecture, with the idea of becoming a set designer. He wound up an architect. He had not been detained for even a moment by debates over honest materials and unconcealed structure. His vision remained theatrical from beginning to end. He had a Rimsky-Korsakov American approach that was as thorough, as monolithic in its way as the Gropius approach in its way. When Lapidus did a resort hotel

he designed everything, down to the braid on "No architect the waiters' jackets, even though the developers were seldom meticulous in carrying out such details. His lobby for the Americana Hotel in Miami Beach, with its tropical forest stuffed in a great glass cone, haunch-to-paunch with a Two Weeks in Florida version of the grand staircase at the Paris Opéra-well, here was the lush life, postwar American, in a single great and gaudy image.

In 1970 Lapidus' work was selected as the subject of an Architectural League of New York retrospective show and panel discussion. Ordinarily this was an honor. In Lapidus' case it was hard to say what it was. I was asked to be on the panel-probably, as I look back on it, with the hope that I might offer a "pop" perspective. (This word, "pop," had already come to be one of the curses of my life.) The evening took on an uneasy, rather camp atmosphere—uneasy, because Lapidus himself had turned up in the audience. His work was being regarded not so much as architecture as a pop phenomenon, like "Dick Tracy" or the Busby Berkeley movies. I kept trying to put in my two cents' worth about the general question of portraying American power, wealth, and exuberance in architectural form. I might as well have been talking about numerology in the Yucatán. The initial camp rush had passed, and the assembled architects began to give Lapidus' work a predictable going-over. At the end Lapidus himself stood up and said that the Soviets had once asked him to come to Russia and design some public housing and that they had been highly pleased with the results. Then he sat down. Nobody could quite figure it out, unless he was making a desperate claim of redeeming social significance . . . that might make him less radioactive in an ar-



could achieve a maior reputation outside the compounds,"

The atrium lobby of John Portman's Hvatt O'Hare Hotel near O'Hare Airport, Chicago. Portman's American exuberance was more than the sons of the Silver Prince could stomach.

chitectural world given over to hotels, luxury highrises, schools, and corporate headquarters in the style of worker housing.

John Portman, meantime, has become the Lanidus of today. His enormous Bahylonian ziggurat hotels, with their thirty-story atriums and hanging gardens and crystal elevators. have succeeded, more than any other sort of architecture, in establishing the look of Downtown, of Urban Glamour in the 1970s and 1980s. But within the university compounds -it is not so much that he is attacked ... as that he does not exist. He is invisible. He takes on the uncertain contours of the folk architect He becomes a highly commercial (and therefore unredeemable) version of Simon Rodia. who built the Watts Towers. What was a Hyatt Atrium Ziggurat, anyway, but a Watts Tower production with the assistance of mortgage brokers and automatic elevators?

Within the university compounds there was no way for an architect to gain prestige through an architecture that was wholly unique or specifically American in spirit. Not even Wright could do it-not even Wright with the most prodigious outpouring of work in the history of American architecture, From 1928 to 1935 only two Wright buildings were constructed. But in 1935 he did Fallingwater, a home for Edgar J. Kaufmann, Sr., father of one of his apprentices. This structure of concrete slabs, anchored in rock and cantilevered out over a waterfall in the Pennsylvania highlands, was the start of the final phase of Wright's career. He was sixty-nine years old at the time. In the next twenty-two years, until his death at the age of ninety-one in 1957, he did more than half of his life's work, more than 180 buildings, including the Johnson Wax headquarters in Racine, Wisconsin, Herbert F. Johnson's mansion, "Wingspread," Taliesin West, the Florida Southern campus, the Usonian homes, the Price Company Tower, and the Guggenheim Museum. Within the university compounds this earned Wright a reputation like Andrew Wyeth's in the world of painting: okay, for a back number.

In a way, the very productivity of a man like Wright, Portman, or Stone counted against him, given the new mental atmosphere in the universities. Oh, it was easy enough, one supposed, to go out into the marketplace and wheedle and vamp and dance for clients and get buildings to do. But the brave soul was he who remained within the compound, stayed within the university orbit, and risked the first ten or twenty years of his career in intellectual competition, doing the occasional small building, where a convenient opportunity presented itself, in the Corbu manner: a summer

house for a friend, an addition to some facult member's house, and—if all else failed—retirement home for Mother, which she pai for. It was no longer enough to build extraordinary buildings to show the world. The world could wait. It was now necessary to wi in the competition that took place solely within and between the world of academic architecture.

HE ONLY WAY to rebel success fully, to establish one's originality and be respected for it was to proceed with infinit subtlety and with consummat respect for the proprieties. And never minimal building a lot of buildings. The new way was first demonstrated in 1966 by a forty-one year-old architect, Robert Venturi, who has built scarcely half a dozen buildings in hilife.

Venturi published a book called Complexit and Contradiction in Architecture as part of Museum of Modern Art series on "the thea retical background of modern architecture. Venturi's essay looked, on the face of it, like sheer apostasy. He took Mies' famous dictum "Less is more," and turned it on its head. "Les is a bore," he said. He called for "messy vital ity" to replace modernism's "obvious unity," for "hybrid" elements to replace modernism' "pure" ones; he preferred the distorted to the straightforward, the ambiguous to the articu lated, the inconsistent and equivocal to the direct and clear, "both-and" to "either-or." "black and white and sometimes gray" to "black or white," "richness of meaning" to "clarity of meaning." In Learning from La. Vegas and "Learning from Levittown" he told where the necessary "messy vitality" might be found. Its cues would come from the "ver nacular" architecture of America in the second half of the twentieth century. "Main Street is almost all right," according to one of his dicta So were the housing developments (Levittown and the commercial strips (Las Vegas).

Venturi seemed to be saying it was time to remove architecture from the elite work of the universities—i.e., the compounds—and make it once more familiar, comfortable, cozy and appealing to ordinary people; and to remove it from the level of theory and restore it to the compromising and inconsistent but nevertheless rich terrain of real life. In short he seemed to be committing outright apostasy.

It was for this reason that outsiders were so baffled by Venturi's buildings themselves. There were very few Venturi buildings, as one might well understand, since he was young and rebel. (One was for Mother.) At the time Complexity and Contradiction in Architecure was published, his only building of any ize was the Guild House, a Quaker apartnent project for old people in Philadelphia. for such an outspoken young man (among arhitects, anybody under fifty was young), Venuri worked in a somewhat . . . tentative way, f he was departing from modernism, he was packing off gingerly, with tiny steps and soft ootfalls. In fact, the Guild House bore a curipusly strong resemblance to Bruno Taut's Red Front! worker-housing project in Berlin thirtyeven years before. And Bruno, despite the ocasional lapse in taste, such as using a color, and devoted his life to getting it right in the orthodox manner.

One tipoff, to all baffled outsiders, should have been that Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture was published in a Museum of Modern Art series. Over at Utopia, Ltd., they lid not publish books on "the theoretical background of modern architecture" by apos-

ates.

Venturi's academic credentials were excelent. He had studied architecture at Princeton and was on the faculty at Yale. Like his friend Louis Kahn, he had also studied for a year in Rome as a fellow of the American Academy. In fact. Venturi was the classic architect-intellectual for the new age: young, slender, softspoken, cool, ironic, urbane, highly educated, charming with just the right amount of reticence, sophisticated in the lore and the strategies of modern architecture, able to mix plain words with scholarly ones, historical references of the more esoteric sort-to Lutyens, Soane, Vanbrugh, Borromini-with references of the more banal sort-to billboards, electric signs, shopping centers, frontyard mailboxes. Complexity and Contradiction appeared with moving and even slightly purple endorsements in the form of an introduction by Yale's prominent architectural historian, Vincent Scully, and a foreword by Arthur Drexler, curator for architecture at the Museum of Modern Art. Scully said that Venturi's work "seems to approach tragic status in the tradition of [Frank] Furness, Louis Sullivan, Wright, and Kahn." (The tragic link between these four, as nearly as one can make out from Scully's text, is that at one time or another they all had to work in Philadelphia.)

Studied closely, Venturi's treatise turns out to be not apostasy at all but rather an agile and brilliant skip along the top of the wall of the compound. For a start, he calls it a "gentle" manifesto. But manifestos are not gentle. They are commandments, brought down from the mountaintop, to the tune of thunder. Lea

Complexity and Contradiction is no manifesto at all; Venturi is not trying to remove the divinity of art and the authority of taste from the official precinct. He sends out that signal at the very outset:

"I like complexity and contradiction in architecture. I do not like the incoherence or arbitrariness of incompetent architecture nor the precious intricacies of picturesqueness or expressionism." Translation: I, like you, am against the bourgeois (picturesque, precious, intricate, arbitrary, incoherent, and incompetent). Moreover, I, like you, have no interest in the merely eccentric (expressionism, in the Saarinen or Mendelsohn manner). Venturi continues: "Instead, I speak of a complex and contradictory architecture based on the richness and ambiguity of modern experience, including that experience which is inherent in art." This turns out to be the most important sentence in the book. Including that experience which is inherent in art. Translation: I, like you, am working here within these walls. I am still a member of the compound. Don't worry, the complexities and contradictions I

"Venturi was the classic architectintellectual for the new age."

Bruno Taut's Hufeisen Siedlung, Berlin, 1926 (top) and Robert Venturi's Guild House, Philadelphia, 1963. It took us thirty-seven years to get this Jar.



am going to show you, with their "messy vitality," are not going to be drawn from the stupidities of the world outside (except, occasionally, for playful effects) but from our own experience as progeny of the Silver Prince. I am going to show you how to make architecture that will amuse, delight, enthrall other architects.

This, then, was the genius of Venturi, He brought modernism into its Scholastic age. Scholasticism in the Dark Ages was theology to test the subtlety of other theologians. Scholasticism in the twentieth century was architecture to test the subtlety of other architects. Venturi became the Roscellinus of modern architecture. Roscellinus, one of the most brilliant of the Scholastics, walked the very edge of heresy and excommunication by suggesting that sheer logic might require that since Jesus Christ, God, and the Holy Ghost were the Three-in-One (the doctrine of the Trinity), then God and the Holy Ghost were also corporeal and had ears, toes, the lot. But he was not excommunicated, and he was not a heretic. He was only pressing logic to its limits and making it do a few one-and-a-half gainers and. one might surmise, trying to make a name for himself. Not for a moment did he question the divinity of God or the existence of the Trinity. And here we have Venturi and, for that matter. Post-Modern architecture, as it is now known, in general.

Not for a moment did Venturi dispute the underlying assumptions of modern architecture: namely, that it was to be for the people; that it should be nonbourgeois and have no applied decoration; that there was a historical inevitability to the forms that should be used; and that the architect, from his vantage point inside the compound, would decide what was best for the people and what they inevitably should have.

With considerable wit Venturi redefined those two mythological items on the compound agenda—the people and nonbourgeois—and then presented the elements of orthodox modern design in prank form, with "Kick me" signs stuck on the back. These became known among architects as "witty" or "ironic references."

In the Venturi cosmology the people could no longer be thought of in terms of the industrial proletariat, the workers with raised fists, engorged brachial arteries, and necks wider than their heads, the downtrodden masses of Marxism in the urban slums. The people were now the "middle-middle class," as Venturi called them. They lived in suburban developments like Levittown, shopped at the A & P over in the shopping center, and went to Las

Vegas on their vacations the way they use to go to Coney Island. The middle-middle for were not the bourgeoisie. They were the "sprawling" masses, as opposed to the huddle ones. To act snobbishly toward them was t be elitist. And what could be more elitist i this new age. Venturi wanted to know, that the Mies tradition of the International Style with its emphasis on "heroic and original forms? Mies' modernism had itself ... gon bourgeois! Modern architects had become of sessed with pure form. He compared the Mie box to a roadside stand in Long Island buil in the shape of a duck. The entire building was devoted to expressing a single thought "Ducks in here." Likewise, the Mies box. I was nothing more than a single expression "Modern architecture in here." Which made i expressionism, right? Heroic, original, elitist expressionist-how very bourgeois!

So Venturi did to the Mieslings preciselwhat they had done to Otto Wagner, Jose Hoffmann, and the architects of the Vienn. Secession half a century earlier. He consigned them to the garbage barge of bourgeois de viationism.

As for the people, the middle-middle class Venturi regarded them in precisely the same way that the Silver Prince had regarded the proles of fifty years before. I.e., they are in tellectually undeveloped, although Venturi was never so gauche as to use such terms. One did not waste time asking them what they liked As was customary within the compounds, the architect made the decisions in this area.

Venturi's decisions resembled those of Corbusier, who had decided in 1927 that the workers should have low ceilings, small rooms and narrow hallways. Venturi explained that people are perfectly entitled to have in their buildings the sort of familiar and explicit symbols that applied decoration can provide. So on top of his Guild House he put an enormous television aerial made of gold-anodized aluminum. It was not connected to any television set, however. It was "a symbol for the elderly."

A symbol for the elderly? Scully provided a fuller explanation. Venturi's TV aerial was surprisingly direct, refreshingly candid. "After all, a television aerial at appropriate scale crowns [the building], exactly as it fills—here neither good nor bad but a fact—our old people's lives. Whatever dignity may be in that, Venturi embodies, but he does not lie to us once concerning what the facts are." The phrase, "whatever dignity" referred, presumably, to the dignity of aged middle-middle gorks sitting out the golden years narcotized by the tubercular blue gleam of the TV set. Just how much

lelight, if any, the residents of Guild House ound in this familiar and explicit symbol, he

lid not report.

But so what! The Guild House TV aerial was above all an example of Venturi's gift for he modernist prank. The aerial was a piece of applied ornament and, moreover, a crown, finial, every bit as much as the "fantastic nooring mast" atop the Empire State Buildng-i.e., an obvious violation of the Internaional Style. But in fact it was only a TV verial, which is an ordinary machine-made good) object whose function requires (good) hat it be on top of a building. So only those whom the architect nudged in the ribs would pe likely to perceive it as an ornament in the irst place. Here we have what became known n the Venturi era as "an ironic reference." Likewise, the aerial's gold finish. Gold, as in stone's gold leaf, was the epitome of the popelessly bourgeois in architecture. But goldinodized aluminum was something else again. wasn't it? It was a material conventionally used for the middle-middle people's everyday nass-produced glitter, such as the adjustable strips on the bars of a rolling TV stand.

Venturi implied that if the Guild House had not been run by the Quakers, who are against such graven images, he would have crowned he building with "an open-armed, polychronatic, plaster madonna." He would have . . . out he didn't. Venturi's rebellious exaltations of "the vernacular" led people to look for plaster madonnas and more in his buildings. But somehow they never showed up. Venturi's strategy was to violate the taboo-without viplating it. He used red brick (bourgeois) on the upper part of the façade of the Guild House-but it turned out to be a dark red orick especially chosen to match the "smogsmudged" brick of the rundown working-class nousing around it (nonbourgeois). He placed a huge column (bourgeois) at the entrance to the Guild House-but it turned out to be undecorated (nonbourgeois), with no capital (nonbourgeois) and no pediment (nonbourgeois), and placed not to the side but right in the middle of the entryway, making it seem not grander (bourgeois) but more cramped (nonbourgeois). The balconies were given decorative grilles (E. D. Stone bourgeois), but they appeared to have been stamped out in the cheapest possible mass-production process, as if by a punch press (stone-cold nonbourgeois).

O complexity! O contradiction! To violate the taboo—without violating it! Such virtuosity! Venturi had his detractors, but no one in the compounds could help but be impressed. Here was a man skipping, screaming, turning cartwheels on the very edge of the monastery "Venturi's wall—without once slipping or falling. strategy v

Of course, a man from Mars-or, we may safely assume, an old person from Philadelphia installed in the Guild House for the remainder of his network dotage-looked at the same building and saw only another typical. drab (smog-smudged red), faceless modern institutional structure. Even within the compounds there were those who made the mistake of describing Venturi's work in such terms. Philip Johnson and Gordon Bunshaft called Venturi's work "ugly" and "ordinary." They both lived to regret that. Venturi was brilliant in such situations. He was a master of jujitsu. Like the Fauvists and the Cubists of days gone by, he took up every epithet as a glorious motto, "Ugly and ordinary!" he said. Then he turned it into "U & O" and played with that awhile. Better "U & O" than "H & O"-Heroic and Original, which was the stance of Mieslings such as Johnson and Bunshaft. H & O, J & B... how very bourgeois.

Venturi often praised the Pop artists of the 1960s, as if they were reestablishing some sort of tie between high art and popular culture. Venturi's strategy was, in fact, precisely like that of the Pop artists-and neither had any interest, beyond the playful and camp, in popular culture. Pop Art was not a rebellion. The Pop artists, no less than the abstract expressionists whom they eclipsed, still religiously observed the central tenets of modernism concerning flatness ("the integrity of the picture plane") and nonillusionism. They were careful to do only pictures of other pictureslabels, comic-strip panels, flags, pages of numbers—so that their fellow hierophants in the Modern movement would realize that they were not actually returning to realism. Jasper Johns' proponents said that his pictures of flags and numbers, for example, were the flattest and most nonillusionistic paintings yet, because they were of things that were by their very nature two-dimensional and abstract. Pop was a leg-pull, a mischievous but, at bottom, respectful wink at the orthodoxy of the day.

For many younger architects Venturi's Big Wink was irresistible. The man was a genius. He had figured out the perfect strategy for routing the old crowd, the Mies-box people, without trying to dismantle the compound system itself. Venturi had found their vulnerable spots: first, their dreadful solemnity and high seriousness; and second, their age and remoteness from modern life. Their ideas of machine forms and mass production came from the period before the First World War. Their Mieslings' approach to the goal of being nonbourgeois had been to take the "industrial vernac-

'Venturi's strategy was to violate the taboo—without violating it."

ular" from "the other side of the tracks." as Venturi put it, and introduce it to "the civic areas of the city." Venturi was doing the same thing, but he was updating the process. He was using "the commercial vernacular" (the Las Vegas strip) and "the merchant builders' vernacular" (the suburban housing development). Down with I-beams. Up with a TV aerial here and a polka-dot punch-press balustrade there. That was the beauty of it. Venturi was upholding a central tenet of the compounds, after all. He was sticking to the wrong side of the tracks. He was keeping the nonbourgeois faith.

HERE WERE THOSE WHO, like Venturi himself, thought the source of arcane "reference" (the terminology of linguistics was now taken up like a monocle) should be the middle-middle sprawling masses outside the walls. Charles Moore, formerly dean of architecture at Yale and now at UCLA, became the master of the camp historical reference. Moore would place a big piece of Victorian hyper-ogeed molding (bourgeois and a half) over a doorway in a private home-but with the following touches that snatched it from the jaws of apostasy at the last moment: (1) he put the molding only at the top, leaving the rest of the doorway with the usual mean plaster worker-housing frame; (2) he used not casing or architrave molding, which one usually sees around a door frame (if one has to look at such retrograde sights at all), but picture molding, from which picture frames are supposed to be hung, by wire or decorative ribbon; (3) in case there was someone who still didn't get it, he attached a little strip of mirror vertically at one end of the molding, so that it was repeated for emphasis. But for emphasis on what?

Charles Moore camping it up in his house in New Haven, Ionic columns-with metal posts stuck on top to show he doesn't really mean it



Why, on the fact that this was only "an ironi historical reference," Intellectually, the mold ing remained as detached and remote as if i were behind a glass case in a museum of foll

Gradually a Venturi, or "Pop Architecture." movement began to form. It included Moore Hugh Hardy, Moore's friend William Turnbull and Robert Stern. As editor of the magazine Perspecta when he was an architecture studen at Yale, Stern had run part of Complexity and Contradiction a year before the book was published, and had helped call Venturi to the attention of Vincent Scully. By now Scully served the Venturi wing of American architect ture the way Guillaume Apollinaire had served the Cubists, which is to say, as scholar, coun sel, and special pleader.

Beyond any doubt Scully had established his credentials as a prophet. In his introduction to Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture he had described it as the most important piece of writing on architecture since Le Corbusier's Vers une architecture. The next few years had proved him right. Venturi was the first architect to create an important change inside the compound of the Silver Prince, Like Roscellinus, Venturi had his enemies, and some of them were bitter. But one and all were caught up in the utterly serious game he had originated: architecture of infinite subtlety for the delectation and astonishment of other architects. The new arcana revealed!one mank to the other.

The recession of the early 1970s intensified the process. The recession wrecked the business structure of American architecture almost as thoroughly as had the Great Depression forty years before. There had been a tremendous building boom during the 1960s; practically every major downtown in the eastern United States had been rebuilt in a short time, Many new firms had been founded, and many older firms had swollen to more than a hundred employees. The expansion had come to a natural end at the same time as the financial slide had begun. Overnight, it seemed, 30 to 40 percent of all architects were out of work. Firms with two hundred employees were suddenly reduced to ten. Senior partners were answering the telephones. Draftsmen were promoted to vice presidents. That way, instead of receiving salaries they could share in profits, which no longer existed. Then came the exodus. Half of America's architects seemed to be working, if they were working at all, for the Shah of Iran. Forty percent seemed to be working for King Saud the Good. The rest staved behind to vie for fame within the intellectual competition of the academies.

N 1972 A NEW compound, known as the Whites, or the New York Five, made its bid with a book entitled Five Architects, the five being Peter Eisenman, Michael Graves, John Hejduk, Richard Meier, and Charles Gwathmey. They played Anselm or Abelard to Venturi's Roscellinus, In their bid o appear original without violating the fundanental assumptions of modernism, they took he position that the true way would be found not in the land of the sprawling middle-midlles but in a return to first principles. Their dea was to return to the purest of all the purists, Dr. Purism himself, Le Corbusier, and explore the paths he had indicated. Their Apollinaire was Colin Rowe, a professor of irchitecture at Cornell who had written an nfluential exegesis of Le Corbusier's work. They were called the Whites because practially all their buildings were white, inside and out, like the maestro's.

Their position was that Corbu had opened ip a universe of forms that were right and nevitable because they came from the very ore—"the deep structure," to use Eisenman's erm—of the meaning of architecture itself. The meaning of architecture? For most who approached the Whites cold, this was a baffling notion. But . . . ah!—the Whites were ready

or all the puzzled looks.

By now the philosophy—and the jargon of French structural linguistics were highly ashionable in American universities. Even Venturi, with all his talk about "vernaculars," 'codes," "references," and "ambiguities," had peen affected by it. Structuralism had originated in France in what might be called a ate or Mannerist Marxist mist. The Strucuralists assumed that language (and thereore meaning) has an immutable underlying tructure, growing out of the very nature of he central nervous system, Instinctively, the uling classes, the capitalists, the bourgeoisie, have appropriated this structure for their own ourposes and saturated it with a bewildering nternal propaganda.

If this notion in itself seemed a bit incomprehensible, that didn't matter. What matered was that Structuralists were people dedcated to stripping the whole bourgeois mess lown to clean bare bones. Structuralists were peneficial to the people by the very nature of heir work. So there was no need to get messly political about it. The same misty goodness enveloped the Whites. The simple truth was that they could scarcely have cared less about politics. In any case, they didn't have o. It was taken for granted that Structuralist experiments were good for the people.







The Whites, Architecture's about-face avant-garde, marching resolutely back to the 1920s and Corbu's early phase, with R & R at Gerrit Rietveld's. Top: Peter Eisenman, House I. Middle: Richard Meier, Douglas House. Bottom: Charles Gwathmey, Bridgehampton residence.

The work of the Whites you could tell at a glance. Their buildings were white... and baffling. They could barely stand to introduce the occasional black or gray touch, such as the band of black painted at the base of a wall to do the work of the old (bourgeois) baseboards. They were convinced that the way to be non-bourgeois, in the new age, was to be scrupulously pure, as Corbu had been scrupulously pure, and to be baffling. Baffling was their contribution.

Corbu was a pane of glass compared to, say, Peter Eisenman, an architect who ran the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies in New York, which put out the two major organs of the Whites, Oppositions and Skyline, Eisenman was Corbu, if Corbu had ever gone to Holland and been hypnotized by Gerrit Rietveld, Eisenman designed white buildings that were Expressed Structure Heaven, They were like a piece of serial music by Milton Babbitt. The outsider found them utterly incomprehensible. The insider—the fellow compound architect-could detect that there was some sort of pattern, some sort of complex paradigm, underlying all the strange angles and projections, but he couldn't figure out what on earth it was. One's own esoteric soul cried out for an explanation.

But Eisenman's explanations were not much help, even to the initiate. Eisenman had gone all the way with the linguistics business . . . Others were talking about syntactical nuances and the semiology of the infrastructure and the semantics of the superstructure and the morphemes of negative space and the polyphemes of architectonic afterimage. They would talk about such things as "the articulation of the perimeter of the perceived structure and its dialogue with the surrounding landscape," (This caused a Harvard logician to ask, "What did the landscape have to say?" The architect had nothing verbatim to report.) But they were all United Press International rewrite men, simple to a fault, compared with Eisenman. Eisenman's great genius was to use relatively clear words from the linguistic lingo and lead one's poor brain straight into the Halusian Gulp.

"Syntactic meaning as defined here," he would say, "is not concerned with the meaning that accrues to elements or actual relationships between elements but rather with the relationship between relationships."

Eisenman was beautiful. He could lead any nan alive into the Gulp in a single sentence. Eisenman was such a purist that in the few instances when houses he designed were built, he did not refer to them by the names of the owners, as other architects did (e.g., Wright's

"Robie House," Rietveld's "Schroeder House" He referred to them by numbers: "House I "House II," and so on. It was as if they didn belong to anybody, no matter who had pai for them. They belonged to the deep structur of architecture; and, if one need edit, to his tory. His confrère Heiduk referred to hi houses by numbers for a different reasor None of them had ever been built. They wer all Corbu theoretical treatises in two dimer sions, such as his "One-Half House," which consisted of floor plans and axonometri schemes based on half a circle, half a diamond and half a square. The one piece of con structed work Heiduk had to his credit was the renovation of the interior of the mair building of Cooper Union in New York, when he was dean of the school of architecture. I was remarkable enough: a Corbu boat in serted, against all odds, inside a Beaux-Arts bottle. I saw it for the first time when attended the Cooper Union commencement exercises in 1980. I could barely concentrate on the event at hand. Cooper Union had beer designated a landmark building, so that Heiduk had not been able to touch the exterior. The exterior looked pretty much as it must have when Fred A. Petersen designed it 125 years before. It was a great brownstone waltz of arch windows, caesurae, cornices, and loggias, in the Italian palazzo style, taking up an entire block, And inside? Inside the old masonry shell, at enormous expense, Hejduk had blown up Corbu's little Villa Savoie like a balloon. The white walls, the ramps, the pipe railings, the cylinders . . . It was all quite bizarre. And why had he done it? Because, being a true compound architect, a true White, a true Neo-Purist, he could do nothing else. Petersen had designed huge windows along the stairways. The idea was to illuminate them as much as possible by sunlight. But this meant that anyone walking down the stairs could look out and see big chunks of Petersen's damnable brown bourgeois masonry. So Hejduk meticulously enclosed the stairs in white Corbu cylinders, converting them into stairwells. Overhead, in the gloom, at each landing, there was a single unadorned twenty-two-watt fluorescent circlet bulb of the sort known in New York as the Landlord's Halo.

N 1973 THE VENTURI, or Pop, architects took on the Whites in an attack that, in the planning stage, seemed like a great lark. This was a piece called "Five

on Five," published in Architectural Forum. The idea was that five architects from the

Venturi wing-Moore, Stern, Jaquelin Robrtson, Allan Greenberg, and Romaldo Giurola-would review Five Architects. Stern led ff with a piece entitled "Stompin' at the Saoie," Most of Stern's teammates opened their ounds with a few bows and feints of profesional courtesy, but Stern got into the spirit f the fight right off. He described Colin Rowe s the Five's "intellectual guru," a man stuck n "the hothouse aesthetics of the 1920s," aithful to "the most questionable aspects of e Corbusier's philosophy"—and resentful of lincent Scully's accurate claim that Venturi xisted on a plane with Le Corbusier as a form-giver." He said Hejduk was doing the only thing his designs were good for: "paper rchitecture." As for Eisenman, his theorizing ave Stern "a headache," and his houses were "superfluity of walls, beams and columns" hat added up not to "deep structure" but to laustrophobia. He called Graves and Meier compulsively modern" and found Meier caable of doing "lumpish" work besides. Robrtson tried to be generous and balanced in lealing with the work of Meier and Gwathney, but when he got to Graves, he couldn't old back anymore. In Graves, he said, one ame upon all that was "weak" and "wrongreaded" in Neo-Corbu, His houses were "crawlng inside and out with a sort of nasty modrn ivy in the way of railings, metal trellises, mexplained pipes, exposed beams, inexpliable and obtuse tubes-most to no apparent eal or architectural purpose."

The Whites screamed in protest. They creamed so bitterly that never again have Imerican architects attacked one another lead-on in print. They screamed, but in fact he Venturi Five had done them a great favor. 'hey had made the Whites seem like one of wo great armies battling on the plains of leaven for the soul of the modern movement. he very future of American architecture eemed to hang in the balance of the combat between the Whites and the Pop architects, or Venturians or Yale-Philadelphia Axis...or vhatever they should be called. Somebody ame up with "the Grays," which was simoler. So it became the Whites versus the Grays. That was all you heard in the universities, the Whites vs. the Grays; the young architects becan to choose up sides. The fact that both ides remained obedient to the tenets of modrnism tended to be lost in the excitement.

The younger European architects couldn't believe what was happening. Those eternal coonials, those most obedient natives, the Amercans, had stolen the lead in, of all things, trchitectural theory. They were having a great ime for themselves, even in the midst of the commercial slump in the profession. The same slump had hit European architecture. In some respects it had been even worse. Private commissions scarcely existed any longer. Architects sat about nibbling at government feasibility studies, anything. Why not do what the Americans were doing? A theoretical architect could make a reputation without commissions. At the very least he might obtain lectureships, and his drawings might be worth money.

For whatever reason, the Rationalists were born at this moment. The leading Rationalists were an Italian, Aldo Rossi, a Spaniard, Ricardo Bofill, and two brothers from Luxembourg, Leon and Robert Krier. The Rationalists were like the Whites in that they believed that the true and inevitable way of modernism was to go back to first principles. But they felt the Whites had not gone back far enough. The Rationalists liked to go back to the eighteenth century at least; and the early Renaissance wasn't bad. The Rationalists wanted to do pre-nineteenth-century buildings-stripped of all bourgeois ornament. The idea was that they were going back before the industrial revolution, back before capitalism; which is to say, back before capitalism could pollute architecture with its corruption.

The Marxist mist enveloping Rationalism was even denser, muggier, and more sentimental than the one that enveloped the Structuralists. The Rationalists had the romantic proletcult notion that the master craftsmen of the Renaissance built from out of the natural and inevitable impulses of the people, as if out of some sort of structuralism of the motor reflexes. The fact that these buildings were generally commissioned and paid for by kings,

"It became the Whites versus the Grays."

Apartments in Milan, 1970, by the pride of the Rats, Aldo Rossi. Bourgeois-proofed architecture for the European school of holyrolling, foot-washing, primitive Marxists.



despots, dukes, pontiffs, and other autocrats

Soon the Rationalists were adding a certain primitive zest to architectural debate in the United States. At architectural conferences in the United States they went about yelling "Immoral!" at everyone they disagreed with. They were embarrassing but fascinating. Venturi made them furious. "Immoral!" Venturi extolled the very gutter of capitalism in its modern phase, namely, the commercial strip. "Immoral! Corrupt! American!"

As for their own work, it looked...well, oddly Fascist. In both Italy and Germany, Fascist architecture had featured Classical designs with the applied ornament removed or conventionalized. When Rationalists like Leon Krier were reminded of this, they became slightly unglued. Fascist or not, Aldo Rossi's work was very eerie. With the architraves, lintels, compound arches, and the like removed, his Renaissance windows ended up as rather lugubrious shaded voids. Soon the Rationalists were known as the Rats.

British architects tended to be skeptical of the theorizing, but they were intrigued all the same. A young American architect, Charles Jencks, something of a Venturi-Moore man in his own work, went to England and published a book called The Language of Post-Modern Architecture, which catalogued and analyzed all the new currents. Whatever his status as an architect, he immediately established himself as the wittiest and most knowledgeable architectural writer in the business. The term Post-Modernism caught on as the name for all developments since the general exhaustion of modernism itself. As Jencks himself remarked with some felicity, Post-Modernism was perhaps too comforting a term. It told you what

The sort of Corbusier-style drawing for which Graves is famous: a proposed Cultural Center Bridge for Fargo-Moorhead, South Dakota.



you were leaving without committing you to any particular destination. He was right. The new term itself tended to create the impression that modernism was over because it has been superseded by something new. In fact the Post-Modernists, whether Whites, Grays or Rats, had never emerged from the spar little box fashioned in the 1920s by Gropius Corbu, and the Dutchmen. For the most parthey were busy doing nothing more that working changes on the same tight little concepts, now sixty years old, for the benefit of one another.

Whites, Michael Graves, pro fessor of architecture at Prince ton, was the lone architec amid thirty-seven artists, composers, and writers receiving awards from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters at their annual ceremonies at the Academy's grand auditorium in New York Graves stepped forward from his seat onstage and received the Arnold W. Brunner Memo rial Prize for Architecture Seventeen awards later, Gordon Bunshaft, now seventy-one and an elder of the Institute, was called on to read the citations for five painters and hand out envelopes with checks inside. After dis bursing the last of them, Bunshaft turned toward the audience and said:

N MAY OF 1980 one of the

"I suppose this is something you don't see every day, an architect handing out money to artists."

The audience laughed faintly, acknowledging that a pleasantry had been attempted but not quite getting it.
"But they also of things have changed."

"But, then, a lot of things have changed," said Bunshaft. "We used to give prizes to architects for doing buildings. Now we give prizes to architects for drawing pictures."

Then he sat down. Not a peep out of the audience. Only a few souls, compound architects one and all, had the faintest notion of what he meant. But they did, indeed, get it. Bunshaft had made no mention of Graves, who was seated behind him on the stage, nor did he look his way. But Graves was the only architect who had received an award, and furthermore it was true: he had won the award for drawings. Or, rather, for his drawings, for his theories, and for his status as Princeton's resident White, or Neo-Purist. Not for buildings. in any event. You could count Graves' built structures on one hand, "Structures"-an addition here, an alteration there, and one small house. They all looked like Gerrit Rietveld on a terrific bender, thanks to the inexplicable

nodern ivv" of railings, tubes, and beams obertson had complained about.

But so what! In the new mental atmohere, in modern architecture's Scholastic pase. Graves' career shone with an unmistakle radiance. There was something sordid out doing a lot of building. Even among e Whites, the New York Five, Gwathmey id Meier were spoken of, sotto voce, as the ther weights, chiefly because they had gog practices and actually made money from chitecture. Meier ranked above Gwathmey cause, in addition to building buildings, he ught at Harvard and enunciated suitably obure theories. They were not so profoundly scure as Graves', however. When Graves lked about "the multiple readings inherent a code of abstraction" and "a level of parcipation that involves the reciprocal act of irselves with the figure of the building," he most achieved the Structuralist heights of senman. (Almost, but not quite; Eisenman d managed to become perfectly obscure.) e Graves approach was known and talked out in the architecture department of every portant university in the country. His warecolor renderings of his own unbuilt buildgs were mauve, blue, swift, and terribly autiful, like a storm. Corbu! One had only say "Michael," as his friends called him, d every aspiring architect on the circuit iew it was Michael Graves.

You couldn't say the same about Gordon inshaft-despite the scores of behemoth ass buildings he had designed or inspired. ithin the university compounds you could y "Gordon" or even "Gordon Bunshaft," d all you would get would be a look as

avily glazed as Lever House.

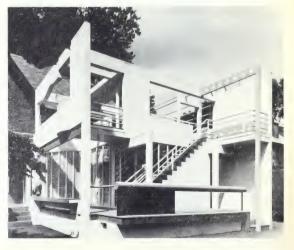
The hell with the behemoth buildings! Every ads-up architect knew you had to excel, first all, in the intellectual competition of the mpounds. The ideal career was the Corbu reer. There had been an unmistakable purity out Corbu, in his career as in his designs. orbu had triumphed through intellect and nius alone, through manifestos, treatises, eeches, debates, drawings, visionary plans, d the sheer moral force of his mission. He d become one of the greatest architects of e world, respected and admired by every ant-garde architect; had created that Radiant ty which was himself, Corbu-without bent of commissions, clients, budgets, buildings. I those things had come his way later. Evenally he would be handed commissions such the Chandigarh complex in the Indian provce of the Punjab. The clients, the governents, the builders, the peoples of the world, d come to him because he was the Radiant

City, which had been a creation of his mind "The ideal and his mind alone. They had fought, at last, to set foot inside his compound, which had been called, appropriately enough, "Purism."

This same process was only beginning for Graves. Portland, Oregon, had just commissioned him to do its new Public Services Building, There was a furor in Portland over both the proposed design and the manner of Graves' selection-much was made of the influence of Philip Johnson-but the fact remained that it was Graves' intellectual victories within the university compounds that had led to this, his first large building, or at least the first one that was likely to be built. There were also incidental but lucrative dividends. Furniture manufacturers began to seek out the Post-Modernist stars to design showrooms. Graves was commissioned to do showrooms for the Sunar Company in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Houston. Venturi was commissioned to do a new showroom in New York for the best known of the firms specializing in modern furniture, Knoll International.

By the late 1970s the more finely attuned young architects were devising a new approach to the business of architecture. They were creating firms that combined the two tracks of modern architectural competition-building buildings and theorizing about architecture-in a single entity. Which is to say, they turned their companies into compounds. They offered a particular approach to design, a set of forms, a philosophy—and a philosopher, a spokesman, who was scholarly, profound, even abstruse, should protocol require it. Archicareer was the Corbu career."

Michael Graves' Benacerral House addition, Underneath all the metal Gerrit Rietveld ivy are a breakfast room and play-



tectonia, SITE, and Friday Associates were among the most prominent. Life in the company compound even had a touch of the communal existence of the Bauhaus or de Stiil. SITE's James Wines became much in demand at architectural conferences in the United States and Europe, His Magritte-style storefronts for the Best discount store chain were as much sculpture or "environmental art." to use one of the new terms of the day, as architecture. In any case, SITE's expenditure of so much talent and intellect on a chain of stores infuriated the Rats. They thought and thought and finally came up with a word or two for Wines and SITE: "Immoral! Corrupt! American!"

For the ambitious architect, having a theory became as vital and natural as having a telephone. Finally the pressure even got to John Portman. He decided it was time he elaborated a philosophy. He wrote an essay for Architectural Record, Well, Portman may have changed the look of the American downtown, but in this league he was a novice. His message was entirely too clear and comprehensible. About as deep and dumbfounding as a raindrop, it was. People like trees and water and human scale in public buildings, and they should have them ... theories at the whatpeople-want level. Well, as one can imagine -how they sniggered at poor John Portman over that!

Nevertheless, it seemed vital, even to the commercial giants, to get in on the new game, at the very least, Last December, Gordon Bunshaft's firm, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, the commercial giants of the old Miesling glass-box vogue, took a rather desperate step. They invited the editors of the Harvard Architecture Review to put together a private panel of architects who would discuss new developments in Post-Modernism with them. The Review came up with Graves, Stern, Steven Peterson, and Jorge Silvetti. They sat at a U-shaped table at the Harvard Club in New York and confronted a team of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill architects—and lectured them as if they were architecture students receiving their first studio critiques. The Skidmore group showed slides of their new work, by way of proving that their work was by no means restricted to glass boxes of the Lever House tower sort. The fact was that they were also doing squat glass boxes with curved corners and the like. The Post-Mods, whether White or Gray, were having none of that. Stern said: "The kinds of buildings Skidmore builds are boring-tall or short, fat or thin, if you've seen one you've seen them all." The Skidmores didn't even bother to fight back. They made imaginary snowballs with their hand and said it was not them but their clients wh were so hipped on having glass boxes. Wel as you can imagine, how they sniggered a the poor Skidmores over that!

Oh, Destiny... At no time did it seem t strike anyone present as funny that here were the leading architects—commercially—in the field of large public building in America, and they were willingly—willingly?—they begge for it—sitting still for a dressing-down by four architects who, between them, could claim felbuildings larger than a private house. Well what was funny about that? Such was the hold of the compound mentality, of the new Scholasticism, on the architectural profession.

N 1976 VINCENT SCULLY refuse an American Institute of At chitects award for architectural history on the grounds that the had refused to induct Rober Venturi into their College of Fellows. It was no honor, said Scully, to receive an awar from an organization that was insensitive—since Venturi was "the most important arch

tect of my generation."

As to whether this assertion had any aes thetic merit-well, de gustibus non est dis putandum. But in terms of Venturi's influence on other architects. Scully once again had point. Venturi's wing, the Grays, was slowl winning the great battle on the plains of heaven. The Whites were beginning to aban don their Purist position-and their Struct turalist jargon. (In the universities, Structur alism itself was being challenged by the nev notion of Entropy, which held that there were no neat, logical deep structures after all; it wa an uncertain, stochastic, Barnum & Baile world.) Graves began to work extremely subtle variations on the Venturi approach. He sough a higher synthesis of White and Gray, on worthy of Abelard or Duns Scotus. He wa still using White "codes of abstraction"but the codes referred to the familiar archi tectural environment of Venturi's poor middle middles. For example, in an addition to house in Princeton he created a post-and beam projection that looked like a David Smith sculpture as adapted by Rietveld-and painted it blue. This was supposed to resonate with the familiar middle-middle blue sky overhead as one walked under it. Whether any body actually got that or not was not nearly so important as recognizing the sophistication of the approach. Later, Graves edged toward Moore's position of playing Classical forms notably columns, against modern façades so

hin that, quite deliberately, they had the ook of cardboard. The results resembled the packdrops in the typical resort community

production of Aida.

By 1978 the evidence that Venturi was vinning the battle of the compounds was deciive. Philip Johnson released renderings and nodels of his new corporate headquarters for AT & T, to be constructed on Madison Avenue n New York. It became the most famous unpuilt building of the 1970s. The most devoted Miesling of them all had designed a building vith a top that seemed to have been lifted traight off a Chippendale highboy, Philip ohnson! Up off his knees at last! After forty rears!

Johnson had learned one lesson well. He and finally realized that in an age of esoteric. ntramural competition among artists, it was olly to try to counter a new style by meeting t head on and calling it "ugly" or "ordinary." (So did the bourgeois.) The trick was to leaprog the new style and say: "Yes, but look! have established a more avant-garde posi-

ion . . . way out here."

Venturi's partisans were furious. They claimed that Johnson had stolen the idea of the highboy crown and its broken pediment straight from Venturi, from a piece he wrote in the March 1968 Architectural Forum. Venturi had mentioned a motel near Jefferson's Monticello in Virginia. "The sign for the Motel Monticello, a silhouette of an enormous Chippendale highboy, is visible on the highway before the motel itself," Well, swell, Bob. But Venturi had never dared go so far as to actually put such a thing on top of a building. It was as if Venturi had actually put his plaster madonna up on top of the Guild House and not merely talked about it and put up the Old Dotage Home TV Aerial instead. Johnson's AT & T highboy verged perilously, perilously, perilously close to ... sheer naked unmistakable apostasy!

And there are signs today that it is being interpreted as such. Inside the compound one begins to hear Johnson talked of in the way Edward Durell Stone was talked of after the

unveiling of the Taj Maria.

But Johnson remained as subtle and artful a tactician as Venturi. In speeches and interviews he managed to let the faithful know that in such areas as his attitude toward the client, he remained the classic modernist. He told how his client, AT & T, had been "so perspicacious that they gave us a clue. They said, 'Please don't give us a flat top.' "

It was very reassuring! One could see the scene: the CEO, the chairman of the board, and the whole selection committee, representing the biggest corporation in the history of "Philip Johnson! man, approach the architect, making imaginary snowballs with their hands and saying, "Please, Mr. Johnson, we don't mean to interfere in any way. All we ask is, please, sir, don't give us a flat top."

And what did the client think of what he got? Oh, that was a laugh and a half, said Johnson. "The chairman of the board said, 'Now that's a building!' In other words, a building is a building; but a building isn't a building if it's a glass box. What's in their minds as to what a building is, I'm not quite sure. It's like saying, 'That is a house!' when

you finally see a saltbox."

Inside the compound one could relax a bit. Johnson had committed apostasy, probably, but they still hadn't gotten it. They only paid for it. The outside world remained as out of it as ever. The new masses still struggled in the middle-middle ooze. The bourgeoisie was still baffled. The light of the Silver Prince still shone here in the Radiant City. And the client still took it like a man.



A model of the soon-to-be-built A T & T headquarters in

New York, The design is Philip John-

son's, but the victory

is Robert Venturi's.

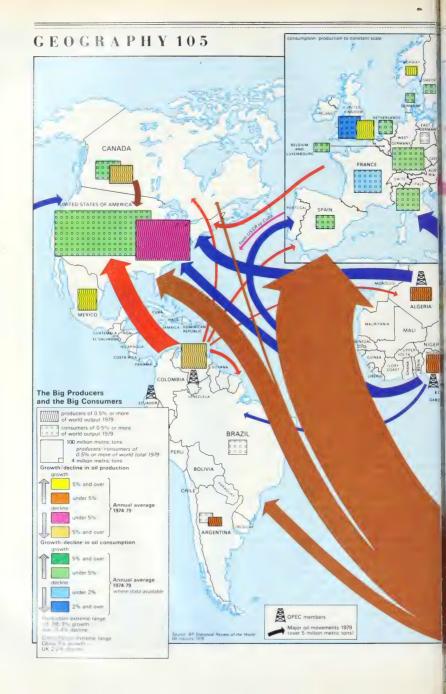
Up off his

knees at last!

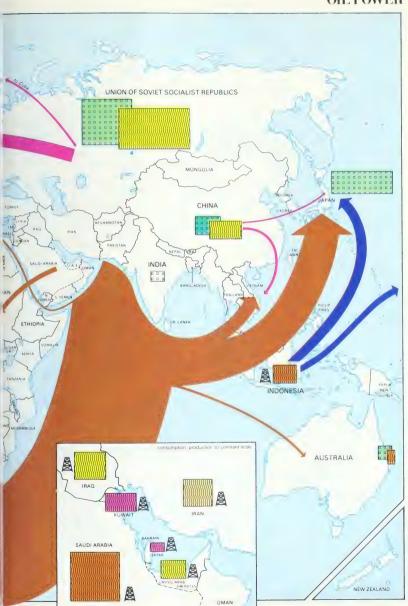
After forty

vears!"

HARPER'S



#### OIL POWER



Geography 105 will offer a different view of the world each month. From The State of the World Atlas, by Michael Kidron and Ronald Segal, published by Simon & Schuster. Maps copyright © 1981 by Pluto Press Limited.

### ARS POLITICA



eve Brodner

## THAT'S CULTURE

he packaging and staging of Art

by Robert Asahina

IDN'T THIS GUY Ibsen write something about a house?" the middle-aged man in front of me anxiously asked s female counterpart. I was a bit reprised by the question, since I serheard it during the intermission the recent Circle in the Square coduction of John Gabriel Borkman. Thy, I wondered, would someone ho didn't even know the name of seen's most famous play attend a wival of his most obscure mature ork?

Later, at the Lincoln Center Theter Company's production of Maceth, I found myself in front of two
ue-haired matrons who obviously
elonged to the "bridge-and-tunnel"
suburban) set. As the lights came
n after Act III, for the sole intertission of the evening, one of the
omen, both puzzled and relieved,
rmed to her companion and sighed,
That was a pretty long act!"

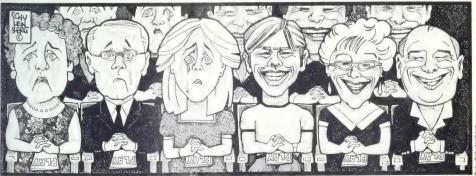
I suppose I shouldn't have been urprised to find myself in such comobert Asahina reviews movies for the New coder. pany, since attendance at plays (and operas, museums, concerts, and ballets) has grown so rapidly in the past few years that it has to include the ignorant as well as the knowledgeable. According to the League of New York Theaters and Producers, Broadway attendance has increased 20 percent in a year and almost doubled in seven years—despite the fact that orchestra seats now run as high as \$35 for a musical and \$30 for a "straight" drama.

As always, musicals and comedies have done the best business. Of the serious plays this season, revivals have done much better than new works, which have foundered badly, Downtown, the Public Theater production of True West, repudiated both by its author, Sam Shepard, and its original director, Robert Woodruff, limped along for about a month and a half under the reins of Joseph Papp. Uptown, The American Clock, Arthur Miller's first Broadway play in eight years, closed after only twelve performances, while Athol Fugard's A Lesson From Aloes

did not weather the fall season, despite favorable reviews. Only Fifth of July, by Lanford Wilson, has been a modest Broadway hit.

At the same time, however, the Circle in the Square has successfully pursued its retrospective policy, with The Bacchae of Euripides preceding John Gabriel Borkman, and Strindberg's The Father following. The recently formed Lincoln Center Theater Company lit up the Vivian Beaumont theater, empty for three vears, with Philip Barry's The Philadelphia Story last fall and then Macbeth this winter. And for several weeks before True West, Andrei Serban's adaptation of Chekhov's The Seagull played to full houses at the Public Theater.

The sole exception to this dominance of the old over the new seems to be Peter Shaffer's Amadeus, which is the most successful drama—at the box office and with the critics—of the season. Yet Shaffer's work has little in common with Shepard's or Miller's or Fugard's or Wilson's, which, despite their vast differences



Bob Schulenberg

in quality, are all serious plays written for sophisticated theatergoers. Amadeus, by contrast—in its air of having been packaged as an instant classic for the lowest common denominator of the audience and in its piety toward Art-with-a-capital-A resembles nothing so much as a revival.

HIS COMBINATION of reflexive reverence and mass appeal was most apparent in John Gabriel Borkman, which was mounted by Austin Pendleton in the grand tradition of late-nine-teenth-century bourgeois theater, almost as though the eighty-five years since Ibsen wrote the play had never intervened. Attired in proper waist-coats or rustling floor-length dresses, the cast looked as if they had just stepped out of an episode of "Masterpiece Theater." In fact, the entire production had that solemn public-

television quality.

Much of this feeling came from the performances, which had the stuffy decorum that one has learned from grade-school English teachers to associate with "quality." Irene Worth played Ella Rentheim, Borkman's abandoned lover, like a grande dame from a Thirties movie. As Gunhild, Borkman's estranged wife and the mother of his son, Rosemary Murphy was slightly more tolerable, although her upper lip was so stiff from stolidly enduring all the indignities visited on her by her egomaniacal husband that I feared it had also been frostbitten by the cold Norwegian air. Still, her icy manner was perfectly in keeping with a production that was not so much embalmed as quick-frozen, like fast food, for easy consumption by the audience, which knew it was in the presence of a masterpiece because it was so chillingly boring.

The real coup de théâtre, however, was the casting of E. G. Marshall as Borkman. From years of seeing him on stage, screen, and television, audiences have come to associate his peculiar brand of pompous sonority with high seriousness. (Remember The Delenders?) Never mind that Marshall's Borkman was a puny whiner whose dreams of glory seemed like the ravings of a frustrated clerk, whereas Ibsen's protagonist was supposed to be a bitter giant, whose grandiose plans for an "endless, inexhaustible kingdom" of commerce and industry were at once an assault on the bourgeoisie and the extreme expression of the emerging modern order.

This production of Ibsen, however, was clearly intended not to challenge the bourgeois conventions of its audience but to reinforce them. When I thought about it, that puzzled man in front of me was probably just whom the Circle in the Square had in mind when it began its series of revivals. Who else but someone totally ignorant of Ibsen would sit through this soporific enterprise, unfaithful to the spirit, if not the letter, of the work? Only someone who believed that Art is something you suffer for the sake of self-improvement -another bourgeois sacrament.

row I certainly don't have anything against self-improvement, but I do think that the growing audience for revivals is less interested in truly educating itself than in being spoonfed candy-coated culture. And in the theater these days-as in opera, ballet, and music-the sugar often takes the form of superstar performers, not playwrights or composers or choreographers. People go to hear Pavarotti, not Puccini: to see Baryshnikov, not Balanchine; to listen to Perlman, not Prokofiev, (It appears as though the only thing keeping that fine play Fifth of July going is the incongruous yet heavily advertised presence of first Christopher Reeve and now Richard Thomas in the leading role.)

Since 1962. Lincoln Center has led the nation in marketing this kind of consumer-oriented culture, so it is no surprise that the first season of its new Theater Company should be aimed not at the serious audience seeking new plays but at those blue-haired ladies who have never read or seen Macbeth, but have heard of Philip Anglim and Sarah Caldwell. Richmond Crinkley, the company

producer, obviously selected this u likely pair for the drawing power their names, not for their talen Anglim's only previous role of no was the lead in The Elephant Mc (which he helped finance), althoug that was enough to make him an i stant star, or at least a celebrit Yet Macbeth is perhaps the most d manding part in the classical repetoire and thus the least suited to a inexperienced actor. And Caldwe the justly renowned artistic directs of the Opera Company of Bosto had never staged a play before.

Crinkley's unleashing of this teat on one of Shakespeare's most dif cult works had the predictable r sult: Macbeth was an almost tot disaster. From the moment the cul tain rose, it was clear that Caldwell didn't have the slightest notion of how to mount the play. She has bee criticized for directing Macbeth a an opera rather than a play, but think that charge misses the poin Her bizarre decision to stretch wha appeared to be a cantilever bridge across the stage, thus creating tw planes of action, was probably me tivated by the desire to create swirling image of motion more char acteristic of ballet than opera. anything, she should be faulted for trying to appeal to the eve rathe than to the mind-or to the ear. Caldwell's staging actually had bee "operatic," she at least would hav been sensitive to the mangled lines phony stage accents, and garble diction that did such damage to th Queen's English.

I have been told that the chie perpetrator of crimes against this language was Anglim, but he wal out with a sore throat (perhaps result of his strenuous assault on th Bard) the night I attended the play No doubt those blue-haired ladie felt cheated that they could not be hold the Elephant Man in Gaeli mufti. But they did have the chanc to watch Shakespeare staged witl the kind of leaden flambovancecomplete with clanking swords, pol ished shields, swirling capes, and tight bodices-that had disappeared for the most part, after Max Rein hardt's 1935 film version of A Mid summer Night's Dream. In fact, the

stumes (by Carrie Robbins) were e only aspect of Macbeth that ildwell seems to have had under ntrol. She must have figured that e audience would be convinced it as experiencing Art if it could tell at money had been spent outfitting e actors in the style to which pubtellevision has made its viewers customed.

ONEY HAS certainly been lavished in abundance on Amadeus-over \$1 mil-Amaaeus—over lion, it has been reported. least part of the sum was well ent: John Bury's sets suggest the lendor of eighteenth-century Vienwithout cluttering the stage with e overstuffed furniture so often en in revivals. But the sparsely indsome design is about the only strained or subtle aspect of Amaus. The rest of the production ovides a gross example of how a av can become a big hit if the auence is hungry enough for instant lture (just add favorable reviews id stir).

Shaffer began with the well-known lationship between Antonio Salieri -who enjoyed honor and fame as e teacher of Beethoven, Schubert, id Liszt, and as Kapellmeister of e court of Vienna-and Wolfgang madeus Mozart, who was struging to make a living while his enius went relatively unrecognized. alieri was known to have been stile toward Mozart (although he d not poison him, as Rimskyorsakov suggested in his opera ozart and Salieri, based on Pushn's poem). And, from his pubshed letters, it is apparent that lozart was considerably less than 1 exemplar of virtue. So Shaffer lought that the contrast between ie two composers would illuminate e tension between art and morality: alieri, as the playwright portrays im, owes his worldly success to a ildhood promise he made to God be virtuous, only to have his faith locked by the very existence of lozart, who is not only considerably ore talented but considerably less ioral. And it is Salieri's ironic curse -for which he holds God accountable—to be the only one in Vienna to appreciate Mozart while Mozart is still alive.

Unfortunately, the idea that their rivalry tells us anything about either art or morality is pretty silly. Shaffer goes to great lengths to show Mozart as a foul-mouthed, childish, sadomasochistic, self-indulgent boor -and we are supposed to be shocked. The mainspring of the plot is Salieri's growing loss of faith in God for not rewarding his virtuous life, while simultaneously gracing Mozart (thus the double meaning of the title) with genius-and we are supposed to believe his outrage at the "betrayal." Yet the notion that great artists are perforce good men or that good men deserve to be geniuses as well is the kind of simplistic piety that comes from watching too many episodes of "Masterpiece Theater" and concluding that if art is good for you then it must be even better for artists.

Shaffer and his director, Peter Hall, stimulate this knee-jerk response by employing an arsenal of time-tested middlebrow devices. Amadeus was written and originally produced by Englishmen, and the three principals in the New York cast are English. So the audience unquestioningly accepts that the play's the real thing here in the States, which won independence two centuries ago but never did overcome a nagging sense of cultural inferiority. (British industry may be depressed, but the culture mills keep grinding out hits for the colonial market.) American theatergoers seem to believe that quality goes hand in hand with an English accent.

Then there is what might be called the Art-by-association ploy. Stud the script with musical references just familiar enough for theatergoers to take snobbish pride in recognizing, titillate the audience with "revelations" about the lives of the artists upon whom the characters are based, and play Mozart's greatest hits in the background. With such juicy morsels of culture, how could a production fail to satisfy the need of consumers for instant gratification? Never mind that the notion of exposing the man behind the artist is

merely phony daring, another instance of how the avant-garde impulse pour épater le bourgeois has been appropriated by commercial hacks to entertain the bourgeoisie. Never mind that the music—recorded, not live—comes over a sound system that would be an embarrassment to a high-school gymnasium. If a playwright drags in enough genuine art—even second- or third-hand—into his own impoverished imitation, audiences are bound to assume that some of it has rubbed off.

F COURSE, the fact that dramas (rather than musicals or comedies) of any sort attract an audience at all these days is a hopeful sign. Yet the success of a spurious work like Amadeus or of one tired revival after another is enough to make me despair, as long as serious new works are neglected and fold, or never even get produced.

The expectations of the audience are surely responsible in part for this sorry state of affairs. According to the League of New York Theaters and Producers, theatergoers from New York tend to be young (under thirty-five) and affluent (with incomes of at least \$25,000). The latter is hardly surprising, since ticket prices are so high. And it is reassuring that blue-haired ladies and anxious middle-aged couples aren't all there is to the audience for plays. Yet it is also puzzling that what was once earnestly called the best-educated generation in American history should be willing to settle for so little when it comes to the theater.

I can only guess that my uppermiddle-class peers are so busy earning those handsome salaries that they are also feeling guilty that their expensive liberal-arts educations aren't being put to better use. Thus they add their guilty desires to the large public reservoir of vague cultural yearnings (the product of mass higher education), which combine with status anxieties to make art the chief item of conspicuous consumption in the 1980s. And since taste and intelligence don't necessarily grow along with incomes or appetites, it is natural that the cultural items that satisfy the most while demanding the least (in nonmonetary expenditures, such as intellectual effort) are the most eagerly sought after. There's nothing like a dead play for a high-minded cultural fix, especially since the cost of tickets adds to the snob appeal.

Given this market model, one can hardly complain too much about the state of the theater. I would be the last to argue that new plays that fail to draw an audience somehow deserve to be produced or to survive.on Broadway; conversely, I guess I can't really gripe—on economic grounds—about the success of Amadeus. What is most disheartening these days, however, is the absence of any alternative, whether profit-making or not, to the consumer-oriented culture mills

There was a time when the role of developing serious plays for a sophisticated audience was filled by the nonprofit theaters-Off-Broadway and regional playhouses. But both have become little more than a try-out network for Broadwaybound shows. At the Public Theater, for example, Joseph Papp-having made commercial successes of A Chorus Line several years ago and of The Pirates of Penzance last year -now seems dedicated less to encouraging artists to develop new works than to building them into lucrative Broadway properties himself. Is he an artistic director or an entrepreneur? The two roles are not mutually exclusive, of course. But they are often in conflict, as was most apparent in the True West fiasco.

Over the past decades, a national permanent repertory company, performing the classics along with significant new works, has been suggested countless times as the most desirable alternative to commercial theater; it would educate the public, train directors and actors, and serve as a living library of theatrical art. Yet the current stagings of the classics suggest not that the repertory ideal is being taken seriously but that "Masterpiece Theater" has proved the existence of a large audience for

packaged classics.\* If the recent revivals are any example, a permanent repertory company is the last thing the theater needs.

O SOME, the theater doesn't need anything it doesn't already have. Impressed by Broadway's revival after years of marginal existence, William Iovanovich recently wrote that the other entertainment industries especially the movie business, after the disaster of Heaven's Gate, and book publishing, after the bidding wars that have pushed advances and fees for paperback rights so high that near-impossible sales figures are reguired just to break even-should follow the example of the theater and "think small." His analysis amounted to an endorsement of the current Broadway practice of carefully targeting an audience and delivering exactly what it wants: 42nd Street and Sugar Babies for the nostalgia buffs and out-of-towners: Piat and Evita for the "sophisticated" musical fans and Annie, Barnum, and a whole slew of jazz/dance revues for those with slightly more popular tastes; Morning's at Seven and Lunch Hour for the matinée crowd: The Elephant Man and various revivals for culture consumers. And nothing for sophisticated theatergoers in search of serious new plays.

Perhaps such an audience doesn't exist these days. I find that people who can talk knowledgeably about the newest noteworthy novel or the latest foreign film are often as ignorant of the theater as those puzzled blue-haired ladies. Friends who (fantastically) regard Ann Beattie as the avatar of the contemporary disaffected upper middle class frequently don't even know who Lanford Wilson is, much less Sam Shepard. Perhaps thirty dollars strikes them as too much for an evening's entertain-

ment, when half that amount wibuy a book they can enjoy twice a long. There is a limit, after all, tone's search for uplift through Ar Forced to choose among different kinds of cultural fix, and barring taste for conspicuous consumption one selects the cheanest alternative.

Still, a knowledgeable general at dience, less interested in self-gratif cation than in participating in livin art, did exist once for Broadway, An serious works were produced, and more important, written, for thes playgoers-by O'Neill, Miller, Wi liams, and others. What has har pened since then. I believe, is the the idea of the theater as the mos public of the art forms has declined "Serious" playwrights can self-right teously maintain their purity by ain ing only at their coteries in the acad emy or Off-Off-Broadway, while con mercial writers can reach mor people and make more money b working for television or the movie Neither group seems interested in th prospect of what Stanley Kauffman has called "a lifetime dialogue wit the Broadway audience"-the ver existence of which, in any case, ha been called into question. Hasn't th past decade shown that the notio of a disinterested, universalist publi perspective is really nothing but chanvinistic cultural myth?

In this age of affirmative actio and the fragmentation of society that it both reflects and creates, it's a too easy to assume that all group are interest groups. Yet, as Rober Brustein and others have noted, the greatness of the theatrical heritage of other countries has been its abilit to transcend the differences amon its various audiences. Shakespeare for example, provides a commo cultural resource for Englishmen of all classes and interests, and Ibse speaks as much to us today as he di to nineteenth-century Norwegians We may have moved beyond th myth of the melting pot, and no on could deny that cultural diversity car be a source of national strength. Bu pluralism is one thing, Balkanizatio another. And art is not nurtured b a society that allows interest to stand in the way of universality.

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<sup>\*</sup>The one cheering aspect of the proposed cuts in the National Endowment for the Humanities budget is that a large chunk would have gone to the funding of public television; meanwhile, "Masterpiece Theater" and other BBC productions have been picked up by RCTV, a new cable network, and will now truly face the test of the market.

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## WHO'S ON FIRST?

Separating thumbs from fingers

by Benjamin DeMof

The mind of this country taught to aim at low objects, eats upon itself.

---Emerson

FOLLOW the columns, the mediatype celebrities, but I have a confession. Carefully as I follow, picking up on a tremendous amount of grist, I still never once in my life saw a word written about what interests me most with these people on the air. You read about the difference between the real person and the image. The money. Also the hype, how much it takes to make a nothing a household word. (On public TV, which I watch a lot, and this surprises me, it took \$2 million to make Carl Sagan a household word. A known fact. Arco-Richfield saw "Cosmos," they said to themselves, this Scientist fellow should be a household word, and put on \$2 million worth of advertising. So roughly \$2 million is the cost.) Also changes at the top. Back in '72 Walter topped the Trustometer, most trusted man by poll, and here, a Benjamin DeMott is Andrew Mellon Professor of the Humanities at Amherst College. decade later, courtesy Ladies' Home Journal, comes the survey that the person America wants to be is Alan Alda, the Hawkeye Pierce of "M\*A\*S\*H."

Which is interesting, I don't deny. The information is informative. But still, actually, I don't care, it doesn't do it for me. It doesn't come to grips, not with what I follow on the air. Do I care who's first in the polls? With the media guys I'm thinking exclusively how they handle themselves and vice versa. This is the key, the ultimate. Him against them, how does he do? Them against him, how do they do? This is politics, this is work, the whole story of work, the family, America, especially America. Am I unique?

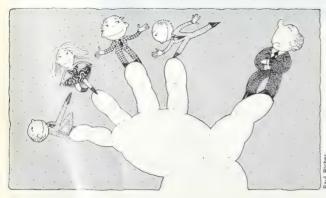
AKE DICK on the "Cavett" show. Lots of nights the show is Howdy Doody. No sock. Dick has on the London playwright who falls all over him. —Gee, Dick, wonderful to be here with you, what can I tell you. And Dick says, Hey, what is it with you writers, you

smoke too much, and London look ashamed and says, Gosh, Dick, you'r right, I'll quit tomorrow, A zero.

But not always, not always. I remember one night Dick had on for guys at once, book reviewers, threbook reviewers named John and Jirand Jack, John from the *Times*, Jir from the *Voice*, and Jack from the *New Republic*, I don't know the last names. Plus a professor name Al Kaline or something. Kazin? Dic is The Thumb, right, and they're a fingers, but oh no, wait till you see

Two seconds into the show this A makes a move. He gives a speech he tells the other fingers which guy work he likes best (Al likes John' work at the Times and John grins) and then Al explains writing an America and they're listening lik it's Louis Pasteur, and where's Dick He's The Thumb but forget it, no tonight. This Al is all over the lot an Dick is squirming. How do you ge back in, whose show is this? Oh woy does Dick squirm. And finally h thinks up a question and he says to Al straight and Al looks at hir like at a cretin. I don't understand that question, says Al, cool, like frankly, it's the dumbest question A ever heard. Al says, Frankly, I don' know what that question could mean

Dick looks around. Where ar these other guys, John and Jim and Jack? He looks around like, hey one of these turkeys is supposed to come in on cue and say, Wait a min ute, it's Dick's baseball, don't jerl Dick around or he'll go home. Bu no, the three just sit there grinning. All wins. All four came in equal, see four fingers under The Thumb, and the other three Jims or whatever ar thinking all through the show, Hey Mom, here I am on TV, look at me But not this Al. No way. Al know



u only go around once, let's see ur gusto. He delivers. The wife ys to me, What's it to you who deers, but she's wrong. Next time I e something written by Al I'll take tice because the guy made an imession. Out of the pack comes one rse and it stands to reason you'll member.

But that's not the point. The point it's not Monday night with Cosell the Rangers or the playoffs but u still got people making their ove and it's more real. This is life. u've got matchups, you've got uscling. There's a lot going on not be missed.

On some shows, of course, they use around with the matchups, uch can be fun, too. "Carson," rexample. Mostly John and Ed and co and Tommy and the audience we it the humorous treatment. anding up for yourself, handling urself in front of somebody bigger such a way that you keep your pointon—John keeps making it into a ke. He runs the number of Tommy

Mr. Personality, and Tommy inds and takes it with this sappy in on his face, and it's funny beuse nobody is that much of a pusher, willing to put up with any in-It to keep his job. Or John puts a ove on the audience. How come u want to wait hours in the rain st to touch my hem? Or on Ed. The ke is that Ed fights for position. nat is the premise. H-e-e-e-r-e-'s hnny! But from then on Ed maydepends-slip into needling to get s own back after John has comented once again on Ed's drinking. ne minute Ed tries to needle, John ves him the warning glance, plenty mouncers looking for work these lys, John hears, and so on. And en it's up to Ed to handle that with gnity, laughing heartily.

o IT CAN be funny, handling yourself, not giving ground. Some shows should use the humorous approach more, and am thinking "60 Minutes" at the ead of the pack. Yes, now and then orley, Dan, Mike, and Harry have a celebrity who could make a ove. But mostly the only handlers-

of-themselves you see on "60 Minutes" are Morley, Dan, Mike, and Harry. Not only do our heroes always win, they never look ruffled. Everybody's cowed. It can be good. sure. It's nice knowing every week you have a chance to see four rich famous fellows go riding out into the world full of nuts and stuntmen and social disease and done runners and religious fanatics and phony franchise promoters-week after week you see these fellows go into that jungle and get results as easy as Coop or McCrea, Always they handle themselves better than anybody they have on. If Dan is coming to New England, the cold country, to do a story in somebody's colonial home on a Sunday afternoon, he changes out of the highrise collar and tie and climbs into a plaid shirt open neck so nobody welcoming at his hearth can say, Hey, fella, how come you're overdressed for New England, the cold country? You don't know better?

Or Mike. Whenever Mike sets up the investigation sting, bringing the camera into the room with the con about to swindle the straightarrow businessman and housewife—when that happens, Mike stays on his feet. The others you see sitting down, and are they surprised. Mike Wallace! CBS News? Give me a break! So surprised they can't move. But Mike moves, you better believe it. He's all over that place, on his feet, pointing, shaking his head, opening the closet door and out pops the police chief stationed as the helper for CBS News.

It's predictable but I don't knock it within limits. It's like church. But after a while these patsies they have on got to have a little moxie, don't they? They're so amazed at Morley & Mike. I would like to see maybe the equal of an Al the Professor on "Cavett." Or a Joan Embery, the zoo gal on "Carson," acting as though what the hell, these animals are every bit as important as you and don't forget it. Not sassy, just maintaining position. Joan has her degree and a job, why should she kowtow too much.

And of course your trained physicians on "60 Minutes"—they give nobody nothing. It's wonderful to

see, the pride, when you have one on with Harry Reasoner. A physician. The Pope couldn't get a kidney specialist to give ground if he hit him with his bat. These guys know their worth. Stay out of my space. Very courteous, but still: out of here. As Frenchy the other barkeep says: Quant-à-soi.

But most "60 Minutes" it's no contest. Morley has on some doney English broad that trains dogs for the BBC in twenty minutes and doesn't even know who Morley is, so, while the lady is at least no pushover, what does it mean? She never knew where she was in the first place. Week after week it's Mike saying to the businessman who got fleeced. How come you don't know better, Jack? I mean ... vou didn't even read the contract? I thought you were in business. Shit, fella . . . Mike pushing these guys with D & B's probably up there half a million and them taking it like kids.

HAT I REALLY love, and see if you agree, I love the wrap-up show. The convention is over and the election and we have the wrapups—TV at its finest. The roundtable where the newspeople sit down to fan, Dan, Morton, Phil, Bruce, Bob, Bill, Leslie, plus Walter as editor in chief until retired. Each one in the roundtable has a problem. You want your time first-why should the other guy get more than you? You want your shot. But no hogging. People can tell when somebody's hogging, so you have to remember-get your shot but no hogging. Plus show respect because you're not The Thumb.

In the Walter days Walter was The Thumb (if you can see Dan as The Thumb you see more than I do, friend), and the fun was, you watch the others muscle for their shot. People in there maintaining position, showboating, fighting for it with smiles but no sucking up, maybe eyeing each other but always on the lookout to say the insightful thing that will put the others in a response-to-you situation. They may not like it, the others, if you hit, but if it's

good Walter will come back to you and make them eat it anyway. Walter heard what you said as long as you weren't hogging. "Bruce, there was something you said a minute ago that really struck me—" Zingo, you're off and running.

Super. I eat it up.

Now, about Dan. I would have said, frankly, Dan sucked up too much. It got worse after Dan beat Roger out and it was so flagrant you wondered. I was positive they would go back on themselves about Dan. Just say to the guy, Dan, you're sucking up too much, The Thumb-to-be doesn't suck up.

But win or lose, up or down, it's drama. No one can forget it was Roger's insisting on maintaining position that brought Teddy down. Sure, you bet it cost Roger. You pay for your space sometimes, comes with the territory. Roger has one thought: We have a president already, a Democrat, so how are you, Teddy Kennedy, under a cloud, coming forth at such a moment and lousing up the other guy's act? Does it mean anything except you're one of

these would-be prima donnas up on the hill? That was Roger's way but without the acting-style aggression of a Mike. And of course it spilled over into Chappaguiddick and pretty soon we the reviewers are seeing one thing: this Roger just is not sucking up. It's always there with Roger the guy has an air. You see the way he carries himself. The chin Looks you up and down. Over to you, brother, I'm talking to the man inside, not the Senate leadership majority. Roger knows politicians cannot be trusted, and that coming across makes the great show. Two people muscling each other and hanging in there for tension.

It's a dynamic thing on the good shows. Changes from day to day. Handle yourself one way tonight, different tomorrow. Yesterday on "Agronsky & Co." Elizabeth was inside, close to the administration. "I have it on good authority," and people had to listen. Today it's George on good authority. Hugh is the senior correspondent and we go to Hugh first, Hugh with the hands and the shininess on his forehead and the

small tight smile, Hugh calling M tin Martin, and then Jack calling J Kraft "Brother Kraft," and oh! is hard for the guests on this show get in and hold ground.

Havnes Johnson of the Post. example. Havnes is The Thumb "Washington Week in Review moderated by Paul, Triple-A Leagu When Havnes is on "Washingto Week," the others salute. It's trick oh ves. Rick is the Times, so mis outrank. Al Hunt is the Wall Street Journal, a respected publication, a has the Donahue hair and a real fe ing for himself. And there's t woman, or a woman, scared of h ass no matter who she is but she trying. But on "Washington Wee" Havnes is Numero Uno, vet only guestshot on "Agronsky," so the both he and Brother Kraft wh they're had on are earning the spurs. Don't hog it, don't suck u show respect, and it's Haynes musch them out of there by the middle the show. -Last word, Hayne Whereas Brother Kraft keeps trvi but doesn't make it, because ve think, Joe, Joe, stop hogging it, for low. Hey, stop proving yourse Definitely Joe needs to be more la back.

LWAYS it's there, push win the shoulder, butt in, but out, handle yourself win class but dammit get vo time. Quant-à-soi, as the man say On the spot. You have these anom lies, not just changes from who's i side and outside but plain looning sometimes. The other day I'm hon with the nasal congestion and I water "Donahue" and—amazing!—his pe ple forgot him. The whole show co lapses and they go after each oth as though Numero Uno left the root All the fingers acting Thumbs. Th day they had on Joan the runawa mother with eight kids she left, an Joan-Jesus, the woman behave like she was Donahue, the pink playing The Thumb, and then forg it, the roof falls. The nonrunawa mothers are furious at Joan, yappir at her for leaving her kids behinhow could she, it's against love ar caring, a bunch of utopians, forge



Solution to the June Puzzle Notes for "Head-Hunting"

The unclued Across lights form compound words when preceded by HEAD: CHEESE, MISTRESS, QUARTERS, STRONG, and WAITER. The unclued Down lights do likewise when followed by HEAD: CHUCKLE, FIGURE, MAIDEN, THUNDER, and HOGS. 10. a-corn; 11. (d) cluded; 14. g(lob) al; 15. pat(1) ent; 16. m(y)-eters (anagram); 19. Across: 4. former, two meanings; 6. apron, anagram; 7. a-(S) king; 8. pu(mme.) ling; broach, anagram; 23. punish, hidden; 24. Roman, anagram; 25. spoonfeed; 26. T(osca)-rend; 27. études, anagram. Down: 1. G-(E.R.) man; 2. reams, two meanings; 3. Lentis (reversal); 4. so(1)1; 5. grads, anagram; 6. op.-por-tune; 9. Pres.-cored; 12. set-to; 13. smart, reversal; 15. war-R(10) R; 17. (t) ampere(d); 18. period, two meanings; 20. A.B.-sent; 21. squa(b)-4; 22. Mu-fit (anagram).

ig the whole point of the up and wn of the show, muscling and ating out. They're acting like the rry of life is in one person, Donaer rushing the mike from this corr to the other and the crowd not en looking at him. Absolute chaos, they have on their brains is tother we defend the family. Regar anarchy.

Or you get the situation that can't doped out not because the people int to pretend to be one person d forget differences, but because e person on the show is so far ray, a stranger, so removed he's king to God and he doesn't want a ing. "Wall Street Week" it hapned lately. Lew had on Granville e investment adviser that broke the arket wide open last winter. Lew s a guest after you hear the volume d the elves. Everybody goes off to the other room to welcome the est and they sit down on the leathcouches, glad to have you here, hi w are you, the whole bit. The club mosphere. Lew doing the little pun out silver, and remember, folks, 're not guaranteeing anything re. You could lose your shirt and at a laugh. Up yours, Lew is The numb and the regulars, Frank and irter, who will guest host, almost ver muscle. They're inside. But now here's Granville and

ey're calling him Joe and getting him because who knows where ranville fits? Is he maybe bigger an any of them? Could they say ell and break the market wide open? Lew begins about Granville's istakes, guy is wrong a lot, missed is rally, lost the downturn, and ranville sitting biding his time, sayg the same words no matter what, ying like Scripture We put you in the bottom and we take you out at e top. Over and over. We put you at the bottom and we take you out the top. That is all ye need to now. No sucking up, it was as ough he wasn't in their ballpark, laying their game. Didn't even want be a finger. Didn't care. I mean-

—What? Well, Christ, what do ou think? Of course it's all one man gainst another. One on one. What bout it? What are you thinking, all for one, one for all? Sure we should have that, I agree. One for all certainly. Where the people are not standing up to each other, muscling all day-let's work for the good of everybody. I buy it. Wonderful. Only tell me where it is, is all I'm asking. Show me where it is, and I'm for it. The trouble is you can't. The most important thing is stick up for yourself or who will. Friend, the bottom line is not one for all. We are talking Democracy. Pictures of the democratic way of life night after night. Where else do you see it, where else do you feel it? Walking to the train I'm a bullet, I see nobody, I don't want to see anybody. They crowd you and you're in trouble if you notice. You know it's going on, of course you know. They're in behind you with BI behind closed doors, the accountants or upstairs. -Hev, look, we carried the guy so long and frankly what is he producing, BJ, the numbers are not right. But it's hidden, it's hidden. -BJ? He's my boss.

On the shows it's different. Less masks. You see the battle unfold. The obligations. The celebrity remember-

ing he's not so big because this is America, no kings. The underman remembering no matter how hungry. he has got to not show it because he's equal to begin with. Night after night, if you watch with me, this is what you see. You see scrambling. Guys struggling to be at the same time kind of proud and kind of humble. You can look for it anywhere else but you're not going to see it because people hunker down. They're scared. They act like, Who me? I'm a happy guy, want nothing. Money's no problem. Terrific. I love my job. Bullshit! They're all waiting and wanting but wanting to not let you see it, wanting to not suck up or look down or lose position. But on the shows it's America. Guys and girls looking out across the air toward the other person even-steven no matter what is going on inside. What I am, what we are-I'll keep watching for it even if nobody ever writes it down. I mean, what is the message, what are they putting out, what are you supposed to see if it isn't this? Am I missing something? Am I unique?

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## **MYSTERIES** FOR THE MISBEGOTTEN

The literary corpse

by Jeffrey Burk

"It you look at it properly, detective stories are a sign of civilisation. And the investigation of crime is a sign of all the good in our modern world!"

-C. P. Snow, Death Under Sail

F YOU LOOK at it properly, macramé antimacassars are a sign of civilization. Point of view is everything. For a number of years I have relied on mystery novels as optimal interim reading (Haigspeak is also a sign of civilization), or what I like to read between bouts with serious fiction, nonfiction belles lettres No condescension intended. Most of those I dally with offer good, spare prose, lots of snappy dialogue, readily understandable characters and motives. and the irresistible page-turning tug of curiosity that labels the genre: whodunit. After half a dozen literary heavyweights, there's nothing like the mental isometrics of a mystery to exercise the mind without strain.

But breathes there a man, with face so red, who never to another said: "Oh, it's just some junk novel I picked up in the airport"? Sure, Bud. And at home it's the Harvard Classics in the living room, the tasteful Penguins and Modern Library editions in the study, and under the bed 137 Mickey Spillanes packed into shoeboxes-not to mention all those unreturned library books with the little skull at the bottom of the spine that keep turning up every Jeffrey Burke writes the "In Print" column in monthly alternation with Frances Taliaferro.

year behind the dresser during spring cleaning. Sixteen years of the finest education money can buy, and at three A.M. your reading light still burns over The Cornse Wore a Puce Peignoir.

It's the uncommon reader who has never felt the need to apologize for squandering his precious time and sensibility on a mystery novel. For some, the anticipation of self-embarrassment has prevented their ever risking the genre. Others try one, and spend months thereafter doing penance by reciting Faulkner's Nobel speech nightly. Still others, apparently well adjusted, read upwards of fifty, when suddenly they feel compelled to pursue a missionary career on Molokai. And finally there are those extreme cases who have ended up with Ph.D.'s and professorships on the basis of dissertations with titles like "Anabasis/Catabasis: Holmes and the Hegelian Vector in Freitag's Triangle.'

In order to soothe such pangs of conscience. I have chosen four recently published books, each of which provides the pleasures of a mystery novel as well as extenuating circumstances-i.e., an alibi-should you be caught reading it.

N C. P. SNOW'S Death Under Sail,\* the murder of one of seven launches a classic whodunit. The unimplicated include a comically dog-

"pleasant people" aboard a yacht cruising England's north Broads

\* 255 pages, Scribner's, \$10.95.

ged detective-sergeant (whose e thusiasm lies behind the enigrar above), an imperious and prudihousekeeper, and Finbow, a mil mannered British civil servant leave from Hong Kong whose hobb is observing human behavior. While Finbow efficiently sifts through m tive, means, and opportunity amor the six surviving passengers, the helpfully confine themselves to small house, where nerves fray tension builds. The reader partic pates with the narrator, Finbow friend and the first passenger prove innocent, in every step toward th solution, only to be of coursesurprised by the outcome.

Lord Snow, who died last vea was twenty-six when he wrote thi his first published novel, now rei sued as a posthumously appropriat follow-up to his last novel, the my tery A Coat of Varnish. Death Unde Sail is a neat piece of work, as ole fashioned in structure as it is Britis' in setting and accent. The under stated Finbow, the A-B-C manner of development, the ironic allusions t popular mystery writers of the tim -all reflect the young author's sel conscious intention to create an ur exotic, reasonably airtight diversion

While you're enjoying it, remem ber that Lord Snow had active co reers in science and public affairs He also wrote serious novels an literary criticism. In a pinch vo can note the year of publication 1932, and claim historical interest

When the trumpet of feminism i

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finally heard in the male stronghold of Harvard's English department, the chauvinist powers that be reluctantly take on a woman professor. Eminently qualified, she nonetheless manages to pass out drunk in a bathtub located in the faculty ladies' room, there to be found in the company of a lesbian. Going rapidly from bad to worse, she is next found poisoned in the faculty men's room. So much for the liberal arts.

Amanda Cross's Death in a Tenured Position\* features her recurring amateur detective and professor of English, Kate Fansler. She is witty, attractive, well-bred, and independent though married. These qualities make for excellent verbal fencing with the lesbians who need her help to remove suspicion from them. Also suspected is a former lover of Fansler's who is the victim's former husband; all three were in school together way back when. A fairly strong case is even made for the murderer's being another Harvard English professor.

Amid this compact plot, Cross pokes a good deal of pointed fun at a crusty institution, and a little at feminist extremism. When she is not tied down by exposition, her prose is abundantly witty, but several times I found myself wishing that someone would just walk in, order a sandwich, eat it, pay for it, and leave. Still, she writes well, and though I found the solution disappointing, I thought the solving, which depends on psychological insight and sly literary clues, top-notch. It's good to know that there are five previous Crosses to bear.

Note also the numerous allusions to and quotations from certifiably serious literature. Don't be shy about exploiting the importance of women's rights; she wasn't. Hold the book in such a way that the Harvard University seal on the dust jacket is prominently displayed.

Another detective series worth discovering is that of Janwillem van de Wetering, whose Grijpstra and de Gier have been curiously covering a beat in Amsterdam for several books

before The Mind Murders.\* In the author's biographical note, these books are said to reflect "his training in a Buddhist monastery in Kyoto." That helps explain the apparent non sequiturs, the startling digressions, the crime that isn't quite a crime yet takes up half the book, the murder with no corpse and the corpse with no murder, and passages like this:

"That'll be four meatrolls," Grijpstra said worriedly, "two for him and two for me, that makes four. Not two, not one for him and one for me, but two each, that's four, but only with two rolls, one for him and one for me. Can you remember that?"

That van de Wetering uses the genre to explore life's bright and bland tenuities (Zen cousins of Joyce's epiphanies) is as remarkable as his skill in subtly carrying forward at the same time a concrete and intriguing plot. Readers shopping for enlightenment might do better to look elsewhere: here the play's the thing.

On the other hand, there's nothing to stop your assuming the lotus position and turning the pages with thumb and forefinger joined. If that proves uncomfortable, you might find it simpler to forget that you're reading a mystery at all.

Don Isidro Parodi (substitute v for i in the last name and win a date with Nancy Drew or the Hardy Boy of your choice), a barber by profession, is serving out a twenty-one-year sentence for a murder he didn't commit. Whether he resembles the slight fellow with thinning hair depicted on the dust jacket or the Parodi described in the book as one who is "fat, and had a shaved head" is not important. What matters is his reputation for solving mysteries without leaving his cell. Jorge Luis Borges and Adolfo Biov-Casares put that reputation to the test in Six Problems for Don Isidro Parodi.\*\*

The fun of these dense parodies is variously accessible ("My speech will be short as if delivered by a dwarf") and so abstruse that solutions themselves do not all maclear sense. Peeking through the paphernalia of allusion and art dodging are a few nicely satirization human types, in particular those whiterary pretensions. The broad humor comes mainly from the lassenarios, which bubble with discisive absurdities and for the most puzzle solved.

Like the C. P. Snow novel, t volume offers the excuse of histori interest, since it was first publish in 1942. But you don't have to back on that; think of yourself as participant in the parodic fun t authors are having at the expense this silly genre. And a parody of whodunit with Borges's name tached is still a Borges. In case y forget what that means, he's the author whose name is printed on t cover in bigger type and on the t

OME OF YOU remain skeptic You'd like to believe that the simple switch in point of vietom of the from "theirs" it's a feminist tractwill help you get over the itch literary conscience. But you do that something so simple could real work. Brothers and sisters, let report in the simple could real work.

In preparation for this article thought it would be a good idea read some of the genre's classic and so for several days I read at walked around with a copy of T Moonstone, by Wilkie Collins, M. copy is a hefty Penguin paperbac with a classy "detail" from son British impressionist on the cove and I could see that people in the subway or in elevators were in pressed by my apparent taste ar ambition. When told, however, the "it's a mystery novel," they imm diately bent their admiring smiles sneers. Another reader might have wallowed in Calvinistic rue, but wisely added the phrase, "... from the nineteenth century." Sneers di appeared, lips pursed in apprecition, and I was delivered from mir enemies.

HARPER'S/JULY 198

<sup>\* 156</sup> pages. E. P. Dutton, \$10.50,

<sup>\* 186</sup> pages. Houghton Mifflin, \$9.95. \*\* 160 pages. E. P. Dutton, \$11.50. Translated by Norman Thomas di Gio-

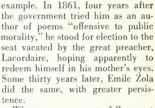
## **EMULATING MAN**

irty-nine immortels, one immortelle

by Frederick Brown

HERE ARE institutions of which it can be said that they enjoy a certain surprising life after death, and rethe power to confer honor, if immortality, even when they have sed to play any vital part in the

cultural life of a nation. One such institution is the Académie Française. Since the mid-nineteenth century it has been an object of derision for the French intellectual community, or at least for those who scorn the aesthetic and social pieties upheld by bourgeois opinion. And yet, how many writers in whose work we recognize a sensibility that goes against the bourgeois grain have sought membership in the Academy?



Whenever any seat fell vacant (membership is limited to forty, the so-called "forty immortals"), academicians would get a note from Zola and find themselves compelled to vote him down once again. By the thirteenth rejection, it must have struck them that his purpose was less to bully officialdom into sanctioning the naturalist school of literature that he embodied than to make it reaffirm, year after year, its own obscurantism. But in fact Zola, like Baudelaire, vearned for the consecration that the enemy alone could provide. "I shall insist to the bitter end," he wrote. "On the day of my death I shall present my name.... So long as there is an Academy I must be part of it. I am making literary history. My grandchildren will know that Zola was refused twenty-five or thirty times by the French Academy. So much the worse!"

Zola was probably the last in a line of grand nuisances that extended back to Pierre Corneille (who failed three times before finally obtaining membership). With his death, the Academy lapsed into a state of dig-

Frederick Brown is the author, most recently, of Theater and Revolution: The Culture of the French Stage (Viking). nified torpor from which it would rouse itself only to replenish its number or award its prizes. In 1935, when it turned 300. Paul Valéry declared that the occasion also marked the tricentenary of the Academy's mockers, who, "being consubstantial with us," had a legitimate claim to some portion of the honors bestowed upon the institution itself, "Would it not be diverting-and serve justice-to commemorate, during our forthcoming festivities, the quasivenerable criticisms and pleasantries of which we have, for 300 years, been the peaceable victims?" he asked, half jokingly. Even outsiders had become insiders, after a fashion; indeed. Valéry's proposal calls to mind a lexicon devised by seventeenth-century academicians for vulgar words-mercantile and technical words-whose existence they could neither deny nor vet countenance in the official dictionary. To tax the Academy with old-fogevism was therefore to participate in a kind of ritual drama, to play one's part in the ancient family quarrel that kept the family together.

HAT DISTINGUISHED this family quarrel from most of them was the absence of a female voice. It would of course be misleading to imply that women did not sway the Academy, Students of Marcel Proust will know what an active part they played in the intrigues on which a candidate's fate often hinged. From Madame de Rambouillet, at whose townhouse the first academicians often convened, to Madame de Tencin and Madame Arman de Caillavet, social lionesses organized campaigns for the men who illuminated their salons and, when they met with success, basked in the reflected glory of election. But until recent years, it was tacitly understood, even among critics exasperated by the Academy's unwillingness to greet the modern world, that the arbitration of cultural excellence was a prerogative as inherently male as the conduct of divine office.

The election in 1955 of Jean Cocteau, an avowed homosexual, dealt a

blow to the Academy's patriarchal precedent, but it hardly followed that the family would straight away extend itself to include women Cocteau's presence did not subvert the forms, proprieties, and ceremonial accounterments that made up most of Academic life. On the contrary, Cocteau, who lived by theater, wore a sword with the best; and one of his more memorable aphorisms. "The tact of audacity consists in knowing how far one can go too far," was, or should have been, an earnest of good behavior sufficient to reassure flustered colleagues. He took his place beside them at the Institute, where custom obliged everyone, bishops, marshals, and dukes, to address one another-in an egalitarian spirit befitting peers who have risen above mundane titles-as plain "monsieur."\*

Henceforth there will sit, among 39 messieurs, one madame. The feminist movement, which is partly responsible for this anomaly, won a symbolic victory when Marguerite Yourcenar, the gifted and prolific writer whose fame still rests chiefly on her first novel, Memoirs of Hadrian, was elected to a seat last year, against stiff opposition by old guardsmen.

Judging from published remarks, one gathers that Madame Yourcenar herself is disposed to view the event with aplomb, or perhaps with something akin to the impersonality she notes in Hadrian. As she says, he found his own life less moving than history itself. Joining all those male shades has not persuaded her that the Academy will be any the less academic than hitherto. But for us, at least, it provides an occasion to reflect briefly on the traditional exclusion of women and the exception made for this one.

HE Académie Française began as a small literary society, which Richelieu incorporated in 1635 by letters patent, giving it a mandate to compose a dictionary, a grammar, and

treatises on rhetoric and poetry. It ticle 24 of its charter states that the principal function is "to work whall possible care and diligence to go our language definite rules and a render it pure, eloquent, and capatof treating the arts and sciences."

One need not look far to elicis reason for Richelieu's concern wh language; no farther than the idea a centralized state, which govern his life and set him to wage v against whatever derogated from rational order he had constantly mind. Ruling France meant ruli French, which is to say that he manded an instrument of conque a master language whose refinement and logic would argue its author and invest it with the prestige oth wise reserved for Greek and Lat To create a French distinct from French as spoken by the yulgar w to rescue those who possessed it from the haphazardness of usage and t accident of birthplace. Long before the Terror, when Robespierre clared that France would fulfill apostolate when it propagated liber throughout the world. Richelies strategy made French itself the hicle for a militant, universalizi zeal, "Not the least of this great ca dinal's thoughts was that by pullithe French language out of bark rism he did not doubt that our neigh bors would soon come to speak it our conquests continued as they ha begun," wrote Pellisson, an ear member of the Academy.

One can better understand, the why it was that war heroes, fro Marshal de Villars after the Trea of Rastatt (1714, which marked t) first time peace negotiations we conducted entirely in French) Marshal Pétain after World War were rewarded for their deeds wi an academic seat. Conversely, N poleon's decree of May 13, 180 which obliged academicians to we a black and green uniform with go braid (designed in minute detail I the painter David), also let civilia members of the Institute know th. everything, even their lucubration over points of grammar, had a mil tary color; that guarding Frence against invasion by foreign elemen went hand in hand with the defe-

<sup>\*</sup> The Institut de France comprises five academies in all, of which the Académie Française is the oldest and much the most prestigious.

foreign elements by the grande

This belief in French as some intely persuasive and morally unique tity, as a receptacle made for spirial goods, became a maxim for men almost every political stripe. Thus 1884 we find Jean Jaurès telling e Alliance Française (a kind of ssionary arm of the Academy) at for France "language is the necsary instrument of colonization" d praising schools that native pulations "could not but love" beuse the language learned there buld allow them to "feel nearer eir conquerors by intelligence."

Our perception of the design this aster language served would be too rrow, however, if it did not enmpass the humanistic ideal implicin the Academy's plan to render ench "pure" and, above all, "elo-ent." For men imbued with clasal letters, who assumed that the ench that would issue from their pors would be a worthy paradigm Greek and Latin, eloquence was it just a forensic gift. It was the anifestation of qualities that deied an honnête homme, a gentlean. From the tradition established · Aristotle in the Rhetoric, Cicero various treatises, and Ouintilian

De Institutione Oratoria, they took e view that eloquence presupposed discipline whose beneficiaries would institute an elite at once moral and cial. As Cicero insisted that the erfect orator was the perfect man, François de Fénelon, archbishop Cambrai, who became an academian in 1694, wrote:

One must not do eloquence the injustice of thinking that it is but a frivolous art which declaimers use to prevail upon the feeble imagination of the multitude and to traffic in the word; it is a very serious art destined to instruct, to repress the passions, to correct manners, to uphold the laws, to direct public deliberations, to render men good and happy.... The true orator adorns his speeches with nothing but luminous truths. noble sentiments, strong expressions measured to what he tries to inspire; he thinks, he feels, and the appropriate language follows. As Saint Augustine says, he does not depend upon words, but words depend upon him.

No less significant than the mastery its language would enable France to exert in Europe was the self-mastery that eloquence would foster in men ordained to set the style of civilized demeanor. Along with a legal corpus justifying absolute monarchy at the expense of feudal lords. whose culture remained essentially medieval, there emerged a literature portraying manly virtue as passion subservient to reason. Corneille's Don Rodrigue-the "Cid"-was the new aristocratic exemplar. Although he carries an invincible sword, what governs it is the formally beautiful language in which, like an orator of genius, he debates his contradictory interests, favoring passion but ultimately asserting the distance from his passionate self that makes him heroic.

URING THE Revolution, when violence in word or deed became the standard by which civic virtue was often measured, and those men held office who proved most adept at swaying the multitude, Archbishop Fénelon's praise of eloquence would have been seen as an attempt to dignify the ruling class with an ethical numen, to seat power in distinctions consecrated not by birth or blood but by an inner light that shone down from antiquity. As early as August 1790 one Charles Palissot asked how "literary aristocracies which have risen among us under the name of academies" could be condoned while the National Assembly, "to secure our precious equality," had abolished "those antisocial distinctions wherein the vanity of the great had found a last, sorry refuge.'

The Academy lasted three more years. Its mantle fell on the government, which, in striving to purge from French every word describing obnoxious social realities, kept faith with Richelieu and the idea that the language of power could accommodate no foreign order, that it must be "pure." There were, to be sure, direct reprisals taken against the official

dictionary, notably in Le Père Duchesne, a paper whose editor, Hébert, was dubbed "the Homer of smut" (presumably by the class he vilified). But for the most part, Jacobin leaders spoke as heirs of absolutism, even to the extent of habitually invoking the ancients to sanction their "light."

Had there been no Academy-and the latter was revived in fact, if not in name, by Napoleon-the nineteenth-century bourgeoisie would have had to invent one. The more acquisitive and mobile French society became, the more inclined were its conservative elements to make classical humanities a prerequisite for membership in the cultural body politic. One man of great, though ephemeral, renown, Monsignor Felix Dupanloup, who joined the Academy in 1854, said it all with canonical terseness when he wrote: "The ruling class will always be the ruling class because it knows Latin."

Bound up with this pronouncement, which commanded widespread assent, was a belief shared by old families, and those nouveaux riches eager to see their children acquire a patina, that culture would not deserve its name if it acknowledged the physical life or had material use. Culture raised its proprietor above nature; it established an inner distance that guaranteed his virtue; it forged an essence impervious to "motives." While the homme moven sensuel spoke from within himself, men nurtured on Latin spoke from outside, their education having in fact made it imperative that they do so. "To write an oration was to put noble words in the mouths of great personages," notes one historian of French pedagogy as he explains how this classicization took place. "Maximian writes to Diocletian imploring him not to renounce the Empire, Francis I to Charles V complaining of his incarceration, et cetera. The subject who spoke was always a great one: king or emperor, saint, savant, or poet. And what did one have these personages say? To be sure, nothing one might have chanced to hear in everyday life but, rather, sturdy aphorisms." Until quite late in the century, the subject that crowned the academic curriculum was rhetoric.

and lycées conferred highest honors on the pupil who had written the

most eloquent speech.

Certainly Zola did not qualify for highest honors with l'accuse, Laving siege to the Academy could only see him bruise himself against a perdurable idea of what culture should be and exclude. True, the Academy had made room for Zola's intellectual mentors. Claude Bernard and Hippolyte Taine. But it could not admit a writer so disaffected with the linguistic faith it upheld, whose cardinal sin was in having an imagination that dwelled vulgarly upon vulgar things. When Ernest Renan (elected in 1878) eulogized academicians past with the assertion that their labors had made it possible "to sav everything in the language of well-bred person's without being pedantic," where could one appeal, if one were Zola, except to the heterodox public, or to the future? The language spoken by well-bred persons accounted for everything worth saying.

HAT WOMEN should be absent from the Academy went unquestioned in a society whose traditional structure limited the scope of female energies to the home and defined woman as a private creature. It was in fact during the seventeenth century, when the Counter-Reformation swept France clean, that clôture, or absolute withdrawal from life outside, became the norm at convent schools attended by daughters of the bourgeoisie and aristocracy. Withdrawal from life outside made boarders completely dependent for instruction on a curriculum devised to shield them against the winds of free thought, to discourage intellectual curiosity and teach them such unworldly wisdom and manual skills as they would need in the pious operation of a household. Religious schools took their cue from Pope Paul V, who told one order, the Ursulines, that "although most time should be spent teaching boarders how to read, to write, to sew, and to do other upright work befitting their sex and age, Ursuline nuns shall nonetheless remember that Christian doctrine and good morals are the first and principal matter they must teach, restricting themselves to the text of the catechism without raising complicated questions, repressing the inquisitiveness of minds in order to accustom them to treat divine things respectfully."

Among Ursuline nuns, who came in the main from solid bourgeois families, a knowledge of Latin literature had formerly been commonplace. but thenceforth their Latin was seldom more than barely adequate for their devotional exercises. The line that led forward from antiquity bypassed women, who found themselves thrust outside the classical tradition, on which were based so many symbols that went into the making of a public or official presence. Woman had salvation to think about (and the sentiment that this is as it should be still obtains in certain high social quarters, where any work but charity work would be deemed unfeminine); the temporal world, including all of history, was man's estate.

How tenaciously men stood their ground may be inferred from a categorical distinction set forth in modern times by the eminent liberal historian, Jules Michelet. "For man, who must engage in work, in worldly combat, the great subject of study is History," he wrote. "For woman, gentle mediator between nature and man, between father and child, her altogether practical, rejuvenating, embellishing study is that of Nature."

To plead Nature was to follow certain eighteenth-century philosophes who, under the aegis of a new god, sustained the old precept that woman, being responsible for domestic felicity, should not address her ambitions beyond the nest she orders and adorns. This essentially summarizes what Rousseau argued in Emile, and Emile, which holds the proper object of female education to be the nursing, rearing, counseling, and consoling of men, had far more influence on posterity than enlightened ideas advanced by Diderot, Laclos, and Condorcet. It was not Condorcet's pedagogical egalitarianism but Rousseau's argument pro bono publico that carried the day in revolutionary France. where we encounter Mirabeau invoking it as follows:

Destined for worldly business men must be brought up in puh lic. while women, who are des tined for the interior life should only under exceptional circum stances leave the paternal house ... Jean-Jacques Rousseau wa deeply imbued with this truth so familiar to ancient peoples, tha man and woman, each of whom plays a quite different part in na ture, cannot play the same one in the social state, and that the eter nal order of things has them ad vance toward a common goal by assigning them distinct places.

Here the same ancient world the otherwise served revolutionaries a moral buttress for fundamen changes they made in the form government serves to justify denvir women the benefits of change. What men lorded it over time and (if o were Mirabeau) profited from movement, nature, to which wom had a special affinity, fixed upon he an eternal order. The Revolution to no measures affecting the education of women until 1795, when it will decreed that primary schools be vided into two sections, by gendal and that girls be taught to rea write, count, and, in the catechism tradition, to absorb the elements republic morality. "They will trained," so said the decree, "f manual work."

OUNG WOMEN waited a other eighty-five years b fore they found themsely entitled to public secon ary school education. The law estalishing female lycées met determine opposition from a constituency who fear was that women, with the stud of phenomena outside their ke would no longer accept the roles of which social order depended, th they would, indeed, become counte feit men. "Woman can be superic only as woman; she is only a monke when she wants to emulate man. wrote an ultraconservative philsopher named Joseph de Maistre.

This was majority opinion durin much of the nineteenth century, an those who set store by it would ofte cite George Sand's life as a harbinge of the chaos likely to attend educe ional reform. But even among disenters, for whom reform did not, as did for churchmen, constitute a reddling with female ontology, there till prevailed the idea that certain ubjects would either prove too taxag for women or else develop in nem an unseemly bent toward abtraction. Thus the law of 1880, which arrendered so much of male priviege, drew the line at exact sciences, t higher mathematics, and, most ignificantly, at classical languages. Vhile women might be taught modrn languages-vulgar tongues, so to peak-and elementary Latin, offerng them a thorough foundation in hetoric would have been rather like anding over the keys to the king-

The Academy behind the kingdom nade known its view of the new attitude accorded womankind when, a 1890, as the nineteenth century as fast slipping away, it refused to ave representatives attend the decation of a statue of George Sand.

ARGUERITE Yourcenar was elected one century after women graduated from primary school in France. To doubt it would give happenstance ess than its due to credit the Acadmy with a fine sense of symbolic ycles. But can it have been mere appenstance that the first woman lected won fame by putting herself n the mind of a Roman emperor. nd of all emperors one so addicted o classical measure? "Women's lives re much too limited, or else too seret," is how she explained her deciion to make Hadrian her memorialst rather than, say, the Empress 'lotina. "If a woman does recount er own life she is promptly reroached for being no longer truly eminine. It is already hard enough o give some element of truth to the itterances of a man."

Those who do not suffer change ladly will note that she started life notherless, as Marguerite de Crayenour (Yourcenar being an incomblete anagram of this patronymic), and learned classical languages under he supervision of a father versed in Freek and Latin. When she delivered

her maiden speech at the august Institute, they surely reassured one another that her gift of eloquence springs from the male line, like Athena from Zeus's head, and took comfort in the thought that things at the Academy have somehow come full circle, albeit perversely. As for Madame Yourcenar, her mind is set on quite another past, her ancestral past, the exhumation of which has

yielded an interesting volume entitled Souvenirs pieux. Here again, through a narrative that begins with her birth only to swivel round about and address not what followed but a world in which she figured as the unborn future, Madame Yourcenar reconciles the discretion, indeed the piety, incumbent upon women with the masculine enterprise of history.

HARPER'S/JULY 1981

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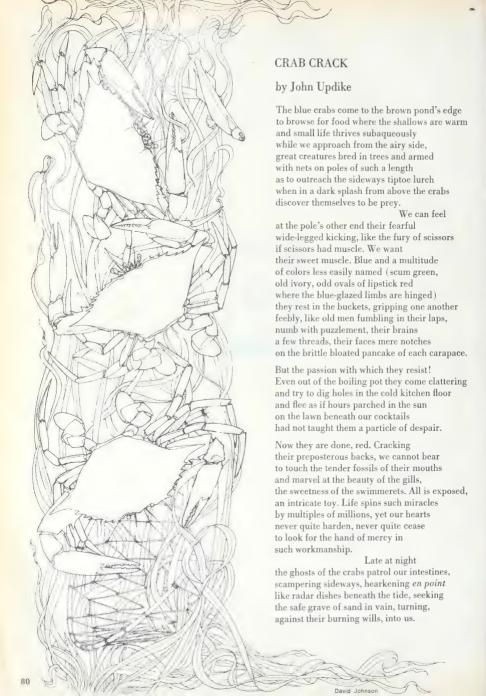
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#### AMERICAN MISCELLANY

## **COUNTRY MATTERS**

ing in plain form

by Richard Ford

\* 'VE KNOWN A LOT of writers who have moved to the country. I've driven out to their places in the - Finger Lakes, snowshoed up to ir moonlit old farmhouses in chigan, slept restless nights in ir too cold or too hot upstairs ms where a typewriter waited ne on a clean desk, looking out a ished window onto whatever fief demesne my friend, by advance grant or inheritance, has been e to achieve. I've shot baskets in ir barns and frogs in their ponds, lked their property lines and their ne walls, mulling fate, until I've t the essence of the land, its freems and risks, enter my very boot es. I've stood in their root cellars, amined their hames and their harsses, revered their woodpiles, their ergrown orchards, admired their gar bushes, their pickups, their old ving machines, their chain saws, eir bush hogs, their "tree farms," ir lockjawed neighbors, their dogs, eir cats, their lath and plaster, eir board and batten, their Golden oks, their mousetraps, their Dents, their Resolutes, their square ils and shingle makers, their butter urns, their kindling boxes, their g. All until what?

Until I was sorry. Until the couny was a source of discomfort to
e. Because on that day, that nighter, I did not live there myself and
emed moreover not to be tending
at way, would not get in touch with
realtor, would not send for the
realtor, would not send for the
hard Ford's novel The Ultimate Good
ck was published by Houghton Mifflin in

United Farm Catalog. I've been made to feel as overcivilized as a commuter, as town-softened as a barber, I've been made guilty.

Though as a consequence, and in defeat of facts, I have tried to lay claim to as much country as I can. I have spoken of "my grandfather's farm" with affection, though it was only a horse lot, an acre and a half well within the city limits of Little Rock. I've boasted of "my house in Vermont," though the place is owned by a friend's father, and even though I wrote a screenplay there once, I used the money it earned to buy a house in the suburbs—where I now live—and have not been back much since. I have tinned my friends'

ears with "the barn" we rented "on the line between New York and Vermont," told tales of arresting poachers, splitting wood, repairing tractors in snowstorms, pulling wayward Italians from Massachusetts out of barrow ditches and taking no pay.

But "the barn," in fact, had devolved to a friendly Englishman from a rich stockbroker who had driven to it in his Rolls (as I did in my Peugeot), even in winter. It had a sixty-foot cathedral ceiling, more electrical outlets than barn swallows, more glass windows than a Scenicruiser, and was in truth so vainglorious that the neighbors were ashamed of it.



E ALL do that, I am convinced, we writers who don't live on the farm and don't want to, but have friends we visit who do. We cash in what few chips we have, just as we do in our work, time and again. A month in the summer with our uncle, while our father was sick and needed quiet, becomes "most of a year"; a summer easily clouds into "a lot of my childhood." Discomfort begets illusion. It's a square we want our man to cover, even if we ourselves have never left square one.

Yet once I'm home, among my lawn sprinklers and hemlock hedges, in safe proximity to the train line and the Chinese restaurant and the Triple-A, my unease turns to what unease always turns to when it's put on the offense: suspicion. I grow suspicious about my friends who have gone to the country, wary of them and their fees at once simple

and apparently absolute.

What is it that the country holds for a writer? In all those forced walks over acreage, down those leafy cordurovs and stone walls, in all those estentations root cellars and truck cabs and woodsheds, what are they putting in a claim for? Why do they want to convince me they need this? Can the cardinal points really be more locatable out there? Is the country, so stocked with silence and primitive sound, more conducive to words? Does knowing if ash burns longer than hickory lead you to other certainties? And if so, why, in this forest of chosen risks and putative hardships and new names for things, having earnestly left somewhere else behind, do they seem so vaguely lost, so marooned, so agitated? After all, what's in a hame?

Thoreau, the country's first townborn writer to move to the country precisely so he could write about it, can answer most of my questions head-on. And in his manner he hints strongly at the rest. "I went to the woods," he writes in Walden.

because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach.... I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world.

Fair enough, And Thoreau's manner is one I recognize; his ardor, the same Iesuitical and agitated zeal that makes my friend want to take me around the barn too often, makes him catalogue too many words new to my vocabulary, and certify to me more than can be certified. Until. weary of feeling bad about myself and all I haven't learned and risked and thrown over. I grow annoved by him and his style, and by what Eudora Welty (a longtime urbanite) says style is all about: whatever "presses upon" what one writes to give it objectivity. I realize someone is trying to convince me of something, and almost no recognition is less convincing than that.

HAT I FEEL is lacking in Thoreau is, I see, what I feel lacking in my friend gone into the country to write: namely, the sense of the lived life-that, Emerson says, "which is its own evidence." I would be more convinced hearing about an argument my friend has had with his wife than I am, for example, about how all those stones got piled at the edges of the pasture by farmers routing them out of their plow rows. Because the argument with his wife always-we might even say archetypally-convinces and is true, no matter whose side I take or how I judge the rendering of the facts. Whereas the story about the genesis of stone walls doesn't mean much, fundamentally-but wants to. By its telling, more than by its particulars, it means to convince-of importance, of truth, of being current. Though more importantly, and maybe therefore less successfully, the story of the stone wall wants to testify to its teller's (my friend's) dominion over the facts and artifacts of his life, something we all want and need, since that dominion seen to flatter us to our severest criti —ourselves—and make us seem least necessary to our own lives.

There are, of course, no villai here. I am merely speculating about why writers move to the country, an why so many of them become so as tated when they get there. Someon whose judgment I trust tells me sha thinks all this anxious hauling aroun specifying, and claiming is just matter of summoning up one's su ject before commencing to write And maybe that's so. Yet a lot books written by writers settled farms and country seats never en up describing a single hav mow cow parlor. Nor am I certain he much writers successfully choose the subjects, but rather become chose by them. So I have to go for a wide more far-flung, and less empirical e planation before satisfying myself

In all cases, out of a writer's li must come his work. And it's safe say that the irreconcilable, the u accommodated in life often fuels the writing-at least indirectly. What have been describing in my friend life is really nothing more than failure to reconcile with his abiliti his wish for dominion over whi Thoreau calls life in "its lowe terms." When that dominion cal not be convincingly achieved or e pressed, or when even the illusion it cannot be perfected either by li ing or telling it aloud, then a sta of agitation exists, and a kind small crisis catches fire-a crisis th I, the listener, can resolve simply I heading home to my own accord modations, but that the writer in the country must resolve differently.

And his choices seem to be thes He can become interested in som thing else for a while: opening collectibles shop maybe, where can make something off his ham and his horseshoes from the traff bearing toward Stowe or Boyl Mountain. He can start thinkin about Key West or New Orleans Santa Fe as happier, simpler plac to try to get a novel on its feet. (else, if he's lucky, he can think this agitation is the precondition att and get on up to his desk at reconcile himself by knocking of

tences that may be either about country and loaded with his orite descriptions of barns and, ricks and egg candlers, or about atever else happens to be on his ad, jailbreaks in Mexico maybe, why his father was the kind odd guy he was, or why he sen't particularly get along with wife... anything, really, that lets a express his dominion over, and lieve accommodation with, the ilion of life that his real life has available.

Which leads me more or less ditly to Howard Frank Mosher, who made his own accommodations

imably.

OSHER IS a novelist who has made a life for himself in the country-in the self in the country suburbs of Irasburg, Vernt, twelve miles south of Lake mphramagog and the Canadian der, in the upper duchy of Vernt's Northeast Kingdom, Since moved to Vermont from Syracuse 1964, Mosher, who is thirty-eight, written two novels and a book stories (the second novel will be olished next year), all dealing pasnately and sometimes antically h Vermont Life-on-the-Border: ries about loggers and hard-dollar iskey runners, whores and fistnters, witches and roughhousers to the end of the line, tales that e more of their character to the ck and fervid French-Canadian od than to the cold Anglo-Saxon. I that relinquish the laconic, glum odishness of traditional New Engd literature for the sublime exaration of tall tales and desperate s. Mosher has managed to shape vriter's life worth notice precisely its dutifulness, in that word's st beneficent sense. A life indifent to self-conscious writerliness, one too head-down with writing I just simply getting along to ther showcasing Mosher's selftermined countryness. Mosher's is writer's life in plain form. He ght have been what Emerson had mind when he wrote, "In manly urs we feel that duty is our place. Mosher is a gentle, nonconform-

ing man who treats his writer's isolation as a matter of embarrassed good humor. When he came to Vermont with his wife. Phillis-they were childhood sweethearts, both fresh from college-he featured himself coming to a place very like the small Catskill hamlet he'd grown up in. a remote place where he could make a life, teach school, and develop some sense of continuity and familiarity that he thought might let him start to write. But the Northeast Kingdom, in the bull's-eye center of every kind of natural extreme and hardship, proved a much tougher challenge than he had imagined.

"This is a hard place," Mosher says, as we walk through a high back meadow on land that is not his, looking out on the valley of the Black River and Irasburg in the distance. "Fifteen years ago, when we came here, there were 2,400 farms in three counties. Now there're less than 800. The Weverhaeuser mill in Orleans went out of business. That was a big employer. Teaching school then was a hard way to make a living." He stares out over the soft swale meadow given up to berry briar and sumac on the low side, a homestead that has not been farmed in a generation. "I've become a regional writer," he says soberly, as if the life's very seriousness has cast gloom over his voice, "I've lived here all my adult life, People know I came here because I wanted to and have made a strong commitment. So I have a claim to the drama."

By "regional" Mosher means that his subject, though not his moral interests, so far has been confined to one geography. His work, and in particular his first novel, Disappearances, prizes at its center the impulse to chronicle specific life, life in the three counties that constitute the Northeast Kingdom (Essex, Orleans, and Caledonia), the upper half of which Mosher has fictionally called "Kingdom County." But for Mosher it is a life of primeval drama with long odds, where action and character still count for something, where the present perpetually alibis to the past, and where the land and the weather play a daunting and, in most people's lives, coercive part. Mosher's

tales surge out of rural everydayness and conventional back-country reality into the realm of supernature and myth, ritual and tall tale, as though writing about life here demands privilege to an extra fictive dimension—because the customary ways of rendering not only don't match the way things feel or the way the citizenry imagines itself, but are definitely not how things can be properly appreciated by an outsider.

"I am making up a mythology for things," Mosher admits modestly. "I've spent a lot of time in the Orleans County Library and the historical societies, where there are wonderful personal accounts and letter collections. There's really so much to imagine, from what other people here have done and witnessed. that I never have to write about myself. For instance, people used to come up from the ponds early in this century, Bald Pond and Brownington Pond, places like that, with whole oxcarts loaded with trout." He points up the valley of the Black River, at the elevation on which Irasburg sits squarely about a bandstand and a range-grass common. The sky has suddenly roiled up and begun quilting for what might be a snow squall, though it hasn't vet turned cold. "Right in the common," he says, his eyes twinkling and sharpening, "somebody dug up a complete suit of Spanish armor from the fifteenth century. And nobody knows where it came from." He eyes me oddly, as if what he's said were something he just made up and I were the trial horse for it. "Why would I write about myself?" he says and smiles as we amble back toward the car.

Part of what makes Mosher's life the impeccable antistrophe to an argument about country life is that for sixteen years up here Mosher has had to feed himself and family. To date there haven't been movie contracts or fat paperback auctions to provide the leisure necessary to open up a casually ironic distance from daily goings-on. And except for the modest advances from his publisher, a Guggenheim grant he received last year, and the cash Mosher got from selling his house in Brownington so

he could finish *Disappearances*, the writer's life has meant one pretty much like the guy's down the road—holding a job, picking up the kids, paying the bills, getting the oil furnace converted for wood. The usual stuff. It isn't especially the stuff of rumor and romance. But it isn't supposed to be.

◀HE FIRST SNOWFALL here comes discouragingly early by down-country standards. on October 26, though it arrives today with only half a heart. In the low ground and the river vallevs, where most roads run in Vermont, it is more a foggy morning rain than snow. But up near what Mosher and everyone else calls "the height of land," the rock eminence below Barton that separates the upper Northeast Kingdom (Mosher's part) and the St. Lawrence watershed from the lower plat that includes St. Johnsbury and the Connecticut River drainage to the south. it is genuine snow, and sticking.

As we drive back over the snowmudded roads and onto narrower roads, Mosher reflexively catalogues tales to connect each small house and plot we pass with a life it has sheltered. It gives him satisfaction to expose the country's character to me now in plain speech, just as it pleases him to write it out. He tells of a woman living alone into her nineties, who, in her last year, insisted that all her barnvard animals be destroyed for worry they wouldn't be properly kept by neighbors once she was gone. Another tale concerns a local woman. a friend of Mosher's, who returned to the country after an unsuccessful marriage, riding a boxcar full of pigs and chickens she had bought in Michigan and intended, once she could find a place to settle, to raise for a livelihood. And there are many more: stories with the character of Mosher's work, his simple, drawn-out oral pacings, his continual astonishment mingled with total reliance on human mystery, and his almost totemic faith in the redemptive value of retold tales.

You feel, in the Northeast Kingdom, an impressive distance from

editors' lunches and the dour numbers business of print runs and subsidiary rights-a spiritual distance much greater than the 450 rough miles you are removed. It is enough, though. The effort to write novels here seems more a vocation than a career, and the solitary writing act is safely isolated from publishing and the confusion that arises unhealthily between the two. Life being what it is here, which is to say immediate and never distant from difficult, writing doesn't quite distinguish itself as it might elsewhere. Its private centeredness simply isn't the center of daily getting on.

"I don't suppose I even think of myself as living in the country until you ask me about it, or till I think about living someplace else," Mosher says, bemused. We are in the living room of his big white Federalist house on the edge of Irasburg, home from our tour. The house was built in 1870, and was once a rich man's mansion, but its elegance is a little time-worn and gentled. "I generally just think of myself as living, if you know what I mean"

HAT, THEN, does it come down to, all this moving to the country, a modern phenomenon of writers for which Howard Frank Mosher is surely a most admirable exemplar and convincing spokesman for being no spokesman at all?

As I've said, I live decidedly down-country-at the end of the train line-and somehow manage a decent writing life, in a place I never thought I'd live. I take no particular pride or umbrage in my circumstances, and expect to take none, though I think there might be a better place for me somewhere, among the ever-diminishing number of cities, towns, and rented farms where I haven't yet lived, where my wife could have a better job, and I could-what? Have it cushier than I do now? Be better, or at least more productive? I'm not sure.

But I am sure that I've gone a route other than Howard Mosher's, though I mean to cast doubts on neither of us, nor, for that matter, on the hopeful fellow I made light of at the beginning of this writing Since Howard Mosher moved to Val mont. I've lived in thirteen place None of them was where I was his or even remotely like it, and none them do I much want to live in aga a feeling that extends even to the plant where I now live, though I'm o tainly satisfied to stay here—I sim wouldn't want to come here aga All this might suggest that I ha something different in mind when say "lived." But I think the force years makes that not be true. I lived where I've lived

The point is this. I think, Pla cannot be extolled, except in abstract or in the most purely r vate sense. And this is especially to for writers, for whom place is st to be important. All those jack photos of writers out standing their fields, who are said to abide farms with lyrical names or in riv valleys where we suspect there imminent danger of flooding a romantic disaster, must not be lowed to withstand Miss Welt other assertion regarding style. verted here to address the issue place: "I cannot see that a write deserves praise in particular for l [place], however good ...."

Place—in Howard Mosher's cathe country; in mine, wherever happen to turn up—is wherever do good work. It is wherever we can dominion over our subje (whether we find it there or no and make it convincing. Or, in Mi Welty's words again, a good plais where we can "give the writing objectivity."

Thought of abstractly, place a most detaches from geography as merges with Emerson's notion duty. Howard Mosher stays hor and talks in the most unassumin ways of legends and local yarns the fuel his work. But these sentimen heard rightly, are not for place, be for the duty the place confers on the necessary accommodations habeen made. The country is almo arbitrary, finally, and our interest it ought, last and always, to be fithe work it shelters. Because the work is all that counts.

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## PUZZLE

#### BIASED OPINION

by E. R. Galli and Richard Maltby, Jr.

#### This month's instructions:

The diagram gives the solver a different slant on entering clue answers. In each group of five or six clues, answers can be overlapped into a word-chain. Example: PORCHESTRA-VELDT. Of course the clues are not listed in order. These overlapping word-chains are to be entered at the numbered squares and reading diagonally down-right to the end of the row, then up-left in the next row, and so on reversing direction with each row. When the diagram is completed, the shaded squares, reading across, will reveal a ten-word quotation from Samuel Johnson.

Clue answers include two proper names, one combining form, and two common neologisms not vet found in all dictionaries. As always, mental repunctuation of a clue is the

key to its solution

The solution to last month's puzzle is on page 70.

#### CLUES

- a. To change appearances, switch the first two notes (4) b. Chorus in an opera sang Seville but just the middle
  - Teach profaned solo in church? Quite the opposite! (6)
  - d. Being vulgar, I will loaf-utterly! (3-4) e. It's tough but curiously not quite enough to make you go in a hole (8)
- f. King-head; small eminence (4)
  - g. There's good on both sides of an underworld group (4) h. He doesn't believe Georgia's in a natural
  - depression (5)
  - Porter returned racehorse without a bit of delay (6) Blame foolishly swallowed by non-aristocrat (8)
  - k. Married English princess blushed-it's not natural (8)
- 1. Take a bit part in a Voight movie (5)
  - m. Macho brew? (5)
  - Valets, undressed, like old virgins (6)
  - o. Plain Pennsylvania dwelling (6) n. Put money in dress (6)

  - u. Aren't engineers in-get on it! (7)
- r. Pleasant chill coming from north (4)
  - s. Twitching during running is invigorating? Quite the
  - t. Pig takes a small fox way up the slope (3, 3)

- u. Piece of clothing we shed for part of burlesque show (6)
- v. A great many back the lady deadbeat (7) w. Furniture style that links English era to Neoclassical (8)
- 5 x. Exploit joke that's told aloud (4)
  - y. Carriage hitched to nag (5)
  - z. Kind of apple turnover or cosmic leader in from the great world (5)
- aa. Holding to kind of deodorant stick (5)
- bb. Measures gold in eggs, unscientifically (6)
- cc. Bad actor acquires degree in "Flipper" (7)
- 6 dd. To search for legacy, be first (5)
  - ee. Two islands in the Bahamas-I'm in form for two outside (6)
  - ff. African specialist in a nursery? (7)
  - gg. Kind of transportation one bishop goes into less (7) hh. Ten quasi-restored relics (8)
- 7 ii. Take a photo of recessive vard flower (5)
  - jj. Being excessively fond of dog houses can (6)
  - kk. Varnishes half of jail utensils (6)
  - ll. It's no good even without having a little color (6)
- mm. Tom or Dick endlessly managed to get spy's concealed message (8) nn. Squalid city mess is affecting the body generally (8)

#### CONTEST RULES

Send completed diagram with name and address to Biased Opinion, Harper's Magazine, Two Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Entries must be received by July 8. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened will receive a one-year subscription to

Harper's. The solution will be printed in the August issue. Winners' names will be printed in the September issue. Winners of the May puzzle, "Devil's Dictionary," are Leonard Brill, San Francisco, California; K. L. Mohler, Mulberry, Indiana; and Dr. & Mrs. L. Emmerson Ward, Rochester, Minnesota.



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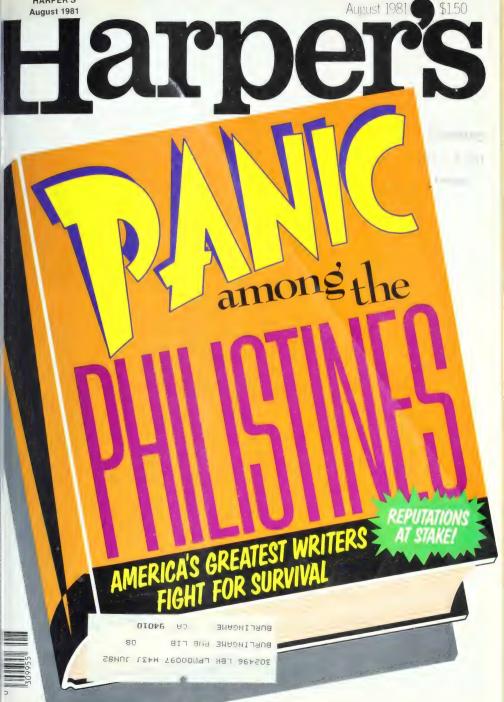
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### LETTERS

Less is less

I was delighted to read the first installment of Tom Wolfe's article "From Bauhaus to Our House" [Harper's, June], Despite his somewhat extravagant sarcasm, Wolfe has -pardon the expression—unconcealed the structure of what's wrong with American architecture.

In looking at American campuses I used to think I was the only one who noted that the architectureschool buildings tended to be by far the ugliest, that buildings that were obviously intended to be of a "functionalist" style were utterly impractical, and that additions to buildings were not only evesores in themselves but an all but deliberate assault on and insult to the original structures.

I have looked at a great many buildings that cost someone (often the taxpayer) a great deal of money and said to myself, "Surely even the architect's mother couldn't like this!" I was afraid I was turning into a fuddy-duddy because I noticed that the only buildings I liked were old. I feared that I had become the worst of all possible philistines, the anti-Modern. After reading Wolfe's article, it seems at least possible that I just don't like art or architecture that is ugly and pointless.

It is at least some solace that I now have an idea of how things got to such an unpretty pass. I'd prefer to think that time will redeem these buildings, since it isn't likely we'll ever be able to afford to tear them down and build better ones; but I suppose the best that can be done i to try to avoid building more of them, before the last of our steel glass, and concrete runs out an we've nothing left for building ma terials but beige construction paper JOEL D. HENCKE

Boston, Mass

Hail to Tom Wolfe! After Th Painted Word, now "From Bauhau to Our House"!

For those of us who have bee fighting the visual pihilism, the aes thetic vivisection, called Modern Ar the presence of the skilled battle brings new life.

Perhaps the most telling of hi several points is the supineness of the client in accepting the archited ture of Modern Art in whatever form What is indeed "eccentric, border ing on the perverse," is that the clien who commissions the glass box nearl always lives in a classical house, and more often than not is surrounded by classical objects.

If there is any consolation in th overwhelming presence of moder architecture in this country, it is that it is equally overwhelming around the globe. The supine client can b found in Moscow, Tirana, Lagos Brasilia, Toronto, and East Berlin.

HENRY HOPE REEL Presiden Classical Americ New York, N.Y.

My guess is that Tom Wolfe, if his nasty but beautifully written ar ticle, will ignore an essential point The Bauhaus emigrés may have been rrogant, but they had enormous

itality.

Had that quality been applied to unning General Motors, which made he mistake of giving the customers that they wanted, American roads rould still be full of American cars. One can therefore conclude that, at east to the extent that architecture s engineering, Gropius and friends rere a net asset. And while I love the Chrysler Building, does Wolfe eally want twenty-seven of them in row along Madison Avenue?

A. Daniel Feldman Evanston, Ill.

Tom Wolfe should give the devilus due. It was Adolf Hitler who was rimarily responsible for the "Baulausing" of America. Having forced he Bauhaus School out of Germany nd seen its members flee safely to imerica, Hitler realized he could do is no further architectural damage. He thus concentrated his bombing n World War II on Great Britain. Dur lives were saved but our cities were glass-boxed.

WILLIAM C. ROGERS Minneapolis, Minn.

Tom Wolfe takes a refreshingly vely look at the too often too solmn subject of architecture, but the ituation is no longer so bleak as he aints it.

The building that shattered the ox is now rising on Madison Aveue. One of its many labels is "The 'ombstone" of the International tyle. Since the design for this buildng-the AT&T corporate headuarters by Philip Johnson and John Burgee, which will be of pink granite ith classical details-was made pubic, more and more architects have lared to emerge from the box. Mihael Graves rushed out of his white bstractions into color and historic ragments-and into a political torm. In Portland, Oregon, his deign for a civic building was turned nto an election issue by local glassox architects. In 1980 the Venice 3iennale honored the classical movenent of Post-Modernism, featuring he AT&T building and a street of maller ones by Graves and others. Clients are not all so passive as

Wolfe says. In the past many actually asked for no-frills buildings, for they shared the work-ethic morality of Bauhaus architects. In addition to AT&T and the mayor of Portland, many more are now demanding distinctive buildings. Best Products has been a notable patron of unusual architecture. Large developers such as Gerald Hines have abandoned the box for pragmatic reasons.

There are Gothic spires, monumental stone arches, and Dutch gables headed for America's Main Streets. The June installment of Wolfe's article does not mention that while all too many boxes continue to be built, the most interesting architects today have climbed out.

PEG MOORE New York, N.Y.

Three quarters of the way through Tom Wolfe's description of Bauhaus I had concluded it was the best and clearest explanation of modern architects and architecture I'd ever run across. Having gone to the Yale School of Art and Architecture and having a somewhat masochistic proclivity for living with architects, I have long harbored many questions about this particular profession. But when Wolfe described the young architecture students' characteristic purchase of the Barcelona chair, my eyes filled with tears and I doubled over laughing. I remembered when I was talked into combining our work-study checks, risking rent and food, to buy our first \$500 Wassily chair. The second one, obligatory, came two years after that.

Barbara Thornton Charlestown, Mass.

Tom Wolfe has shown how the official world of architecture and design in the United States was colonized by the alien strain of Teutonic geometrical absolutism. One should add that the psychological matrix of American intellectual life was already prepared for such a capitulation.

The puritan impulse in Yankee life is never far from the surface, and periodically manifests itself in indulgence in self-purgation. Jogging, health foods, and therapeutic

weekends are only the latest industries to exploit this useful obsession. After the Second World War, a new class arose, managerial rather than entrepreneurial, suddenly wealthy in an expanded credit economy but without the moral justifications of the vigorous and culturally aggressive founding generations of the nineteenth century. This new class. not rooted in a sense of historical mission, turned naturally-naturally. that is, for Yankee puritans-to the promise of a bureaucratic, ahistoric style that seemed to confer on its patrons the stern virtue of Pilgrim sackcloth. This purgation was an antidote to the wealth no longer connected to, or justified by, "honest" labor. It was the architectural equivalent of the mortification of the flesh.

In the meantime, the newly mobile American working class, still connected to the production—not the management—of wealth, was building its own America, out there on the highways and in the sheetrock suburbs. The results, visible on the automotive ganglia of any American city, might be called (à la Tom Wolfe) Proletarian Strip Baroque. It is vulgar, of course, but also optimistic and self-confident, and absolutely impermeable to irony, ideology, or self-flattery.

I believe this contrast has everything to do with questions of class and legitimacy. The collapse of a confident, bourgeois historicism in architecture foreshadowed a more general retreat from all claims to cultural legitimacy, and thus to authority, in matters—ultimately converging—of aesthetics, manners, and morals. The void thus createthas yet to be filled.

BRIAN JAMES NEILSON San Francisco, Calif.

Tom Wolfe's article is a very snide attempt to rewrite the history of contemporary art and design. It also betrays a great deal of cultural ignorance.

Neither the Bauhaus program nor the International Style in architecture needs any defense. They are what they are: the historical expression of and appropriate aesthetic style for the industrial-technological manifestations of the twentieth century.

What is more mystifying is why Harper's lends itself to such an ill-tempered effort to denigrate a style that is already being transcended. Is the editor also a cultural ignoramus?

The waning of the International Style is a reflection of the gradual loss of faith in man's capacity to solve his existential problems through reason, and a longing for the return of feeling and fantasy in our daily living.

So the Bauhaus perspective is no longer viable. What else is new?

PHILIP MORTON Darby, Mont.

#### Outguessing the Soviets

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistam has raised many questions regarding both the nature of Soviet foreign policy and the future of détente. We are still deluged with various explanations and condemnations of Soviet motives and action. In all this, the prevalent impression has been one of Soviet "betrayal" of détente.

Even with the passing of time, however, the West is still vacillating between pursuing a modus vivendi with the Soviets and seeing Afghanistan as the cue for the construction of a new international order. The result of this indecision, as Nicholas Bethell pointed out ["The Forgotten War," Harper's, July], has been to make the West appear oblivious to the Afghan struggle. Many have attempted to prod the West into action with horror stories as well as with accusations. Yet nothing is being done.

There is clearly a view emerging in the West today that the only graver mistake the West can make now is to take no action against the Soviet attempt to restructure the international balance. Consequently, a new voice claims that the West should actively assist the struggling mujahedin. This may not be a sin but it is certainly a mistake.

First, an effective and unified action by the West as a whole is practically impossible, as the lack of concrete success of Mr. Carter's policy showed. Not only will an American insistence on a more confrontational posture by the allies further magnify the existing discord among them, it will not serve the most important task—getting the Soviets out of Afghanistan.

Second, regardless of why the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, they are there. It is unlikely that the Soviets will ever admit that they are occupying a foreign land. It is even more unlikely that the Soviets will let an internationally accepted norm of "justice" arouse their moral sensitivity. Aiding the Afghan resistance with, for instance, Western arms will only prolong the Soviet presence and will certainly be exploited by the Soviet government to justify their "assistance."

I am not suggesting that the West should provide the Soviets with a "face-saving" opportunity; appeasement has never worked. Nor am I suggesting that the desperate and heroic struggle of the mujahedin should or could be ignored. However, the West must realize that the addition of military force simply will not be effective in forcing the Soviets out of Afghanistan.

ALLAN Y. SONG New York, N.Y.

#### FM banned

Lest some future historian searching these columns believe Simon Winchester's comments about National Public Radio ["Ersatz BBC," Harper's, March] to be more than just his opinion, the record should show that I have not "banned" him from the NPR frequency, summarily or otherwise. Mr. Winchester left NPR months before he began to write about us.

Frank Mankiewicz President National Public Radio Washington, D.C.

#### America incommunicado

"Xenophobia" in your May issue awakened memories of my military service in western Europe, 1975-78.

Shortly after being assigned to th Third Infantry Division, I was ser on a three-week crash course i German. The instruction was t prepare me to assume duties as liaison officer with the Bundeswehr 112th Jäger (light infantry) Ba talion for an upcoming NATO fiel exercise. Once posted to the Germa battalion. I soon became aware the I was rather superfluous: the Ger man officers all spoke excellent Eng lish and were quite able, without m assistance, to communicate with us The most unfortunate aspect of this experience was that commanders of U.S. companies and battalions di not just expect an American liaiso officer to assist them in tactical co ordination but were perturbed when rarely, a German officer could no speak English. This arrogance wa most clearly typified by one of ou infantry officers who remarked t me: "Yeah, I know I oughta speal German, but hell, the way I see i is this: after 1945 the score read -America 2, Germany 0, Let 'en learn English.'

On my return to garrison, I wrot to Colonel Walter J. Renfroe, ther head of the Department of Foreign Languages, U.S. Military Academy urging him to propose to the dear of academics that two years' studof German be incorporated in the cadet curriculum. Colonel Renfro acknowledged that while my sugges tion possessed distinct merit, it stood very little chance of being adopted A cadet's schedule was already over loaded and two additional years o German could not be "squeezed in." He wrote further that it might be possible to replace a course or two with German instruction, but added that he didn't think "we could read a consensus on that point."

I don't know when this countris going to begin to take seriously the study of foreign languages an accord it the importance enjoyed by other academic disciplines. If the unrepentant ignorance that I have quoted above still exists, I fear a foreign-language renaissance may still be some time in coming.

CHRISTOPHER B. TIMMER: Highland, Ind

HARPER'S/AUGUST 198

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Most self-service pumps have easy-to-follow directions printed right on them. Before you drive into a self-service station, it's helpful to know whether your car takes leaded gas, unleaded gas, or diesel fuel, and also where your fuel tank is located, so that you can pull up to the proper pump and have the fuel tank close at hand. The type of fuel your car requires should be printed on the instrument panel, and the fuel tank location can be found in the owner's manual.

If you don't find instructions on the pump, here's what to do at most stations: 1. Turn off the engine, 2. Remove the fuel cap. 3. Remove the nozzle from the pump and turn the pump lever to "ON". 4. Place the nozzle in your fuel tank and squeeze the trigger. 5. When the trigger clicks off, remove the nozzle from the tank and turn the pump lever to "OFF." 6. Replace your fuel cap.

There are some things. however, that the directions may not tell you. Fuel fumes are highly flammable, so you should never smoke at a service station. Also, fuel caps are easy

to forget and lose, so when you remove the cap try to wedge it in between the door to the tank and body of the car, where you're not likely to forget it. All 1981 and most older General Motors cars have fuel caps that twist on and then click when secure.

When you're filling up, try to avoid topping off your tank, since it may overflow. If fuel does spill on your car, you should wash it off as soon as possible.

to avoid paint damage.

After you fill your tank, remember to clean your windshield. If you've been driving in bad weather, be sure to wipe off your side mirrors and headlights, too.

A quick-maintenance inspection can help you spot potential trouble. You don't need any expensive tools—just a good quality tire gauge, a rag or paper towel, an oil can spout kept in a plastic bag, and a jug of premixed windshield washer fluid, such as GM Optikleen.

To check your engine oil, pull out the dipstick, wipe it clean, insert it again, then pull it back out. The oil should be between the marks labeled "FULL" and "ADD." If it's below "ADD," add a quart of the oil recommended in your GM owner's manual.

You should also check the coolant level. Most GM cars have a see-through recovery tank. If the level looks low, add coolant to this tank. Never remove the radiator cap when the engine is hot, because pressurized coolant may overflow and burn you.

Periodically check your brake, transmission, and power steering fluid levels. Your

owner's manual tells you how. Remember to keep the windshield washer reservoir filled with fluid, too, especially in the winter when you use it most

Most GM cars are equipped with maintenance-free batteries. But it's still wise to make sure their cables are on tight and the ends aren't frayed. Look for fraving, cracks, or other signs

of wear on belts, too.

Look at tires for signs of wear or worn-out edges which can indicate improper inflation or the need for alignment. Once a month, you should use a tire gauge to check the pressure. In GM cars, the recommended pressure is on the left front door edge or inside the glove compartment. Recommended pressure is for cold tires, so check them before you drive more than a mile.

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## SCULPTURES IN SNOW

Notes on the uses of the press

by Lewis H. Laphan

VER THE NEXT few years the press undoubtedly will come under heavy criticism, most of it arising from the romantic misconceptions of people who expect the daily papers to furnish them, at a cost of twenty-five cents or less, with wisdom, statesmanship, and truth. Against the baying of the familiar hounds—among them the corporate buyers of public opinion and politicians with no other issue at their command—I have begun to collect notes for the defense.

Relatively few people like to make the argument on behalf of the press, because the virtues of the profession consist in its raucousness, its incoherence, and its gall. Honest praise sounds so much like criticism that it offends not only the laity in search of oracles but also the clerks and scribes who construe themselves as an aristocracy of conscience.

T RANDOM intervals in the nation's history one or another of the liberal occupations attracts a claque of admirers eager for simple answers. In the 1950s it was thought that psychoanalysis could resolve the enigma of human nature; in the 1960s it was the physicists who were going to steal the fires of heaven and the lawvers who were going to reform the laws and manage the nation's foreign policy: the most recent surge of hyperbole has placed the mantle of omniscience on the profession of journalism. For the last fifteen years journalists have enjoyed a reputation for knowing how the world works. This is silly. Reporters tend to show up at the scenes of crimes and accidents, and they take an imbecile's Lewis H. Lapham is the editor of Harper's.

delight in catastrophe. Few of them know enough about the subject under discussion-whether politics, music, or the structure of DNA-to render a definitive opinion about anything other than the menu at the nearest Marriott Inn. But to concede the shallowness and ignorance of the press does nothing to diminish its usefulness or importance. Even the most mean-spirited criticisms fail to answer the question as to why anybody would bother to read or write the news. Why not wait a hundred years, until the archives have been opened and the historians have had time to arrange events in an orderly and patriotic sequence?

Any plausible defense of journalism rests on a modest presumption of what it provides. As follows:

1. If the writing of history resembles architecture, journalism bears comparison to a tent show. The impresarios of the press drag into their tents whatever freaks and wonders might astonish a crowd; the next day they move their exhibit to another edition instead of to another town four miles farther west. Their subject matter is the flux of human affairs, and they achieve their most spectacular effects by reason of their artlessness and lack of sentiment.

Years ago I formed the habit of collecting newspaper items in file folders organized under such rubrics as "mullahs," "absurdity," "campaign promises," "sensational crimes," "allies," "weapons," "scientific discoveries," "the end of the world." Maybe I expected the accumulation of news to achieve critical mass, or that the particles would combine into a coherent organism. This has yet to happen, and I doubt it ever will. Journalism is the data of

experience, a substance comparable to the immense population of prime val elements out of which the highe forms of thought evolve. It is the best hat can be done at short notice. The antagonists of the press like to pretend that some other intellectual agency (the social sciences, say, of the White House Press Office) could perform the task as well, but this also is a delusion.

When I read through the scrap of crumbling paper in the file folders some of them long since gone vellov in the light, I notice that it is alway the seemingly inconsequential storie that retain their life. The front-page news about treaties signed and generals traveling to China has been superseded by other treaties and other journeys of state; most of the editorial opinion has been proved wrong, and the melodramatic gener alization turns out to have missed the point. But the stories toward the back of the paper, about a lost child or a woman paving alimony or the New York City police catching stray madmen in nets, lose nothing with the passage of time.

The press makes sculptures it snow; its truth dwells in the concrete fact and the fleeting sound of the human voice.

2. Two years ago the publishers of Dr. Henry Kissinger's memoir, White House Years, publicized the book with the claim that "for eight years the story of his life was the history of our times." This sort of inflated rhetoric has kept par value with inflation of the currency, but there remains something grotesquely comic about it. Carr Van Anda, the firs great editor of The New York Time. in the twentieth century, was once asked why he didn't decorate the

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"Not able to organize his material."

This one won the University of Missouri School of Journalism Award for Business Journalism.

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paper's news accounts with the reporter's byline. "The Times," said Mr. Van Anda, "is not running an employment agency for journalists."

What would be have said about the wreaths of celebrity placed on the heads of men who read news bulletins into television cameras? In the United States at this moment there are men and women whose names will live as long as the history of Western civilization-the Nobel laureates sifting the strands of genetic sequence or imagining the inner processes of the stars. Their names remain the property of only a few of their peers, and they dwindle into rushlights when compared with the radiance of Dolly Parton or John Chancellor. It is as if the audience of a Greek tragedy had confused the names of the protagonists with those of the messengers.

3. Journalists hire themselves out as journeymen, not as immortal artists. It would be fair to compare them to a troupe of medieval stonemasons traveling the circuit of unfinished cathedrals with a repertoire of conventional forms. They can carve figures of the saints fifty feet above the nave, but nobody would expect them to impart expression to the

Or, to take a metaphor more likely to recommend itself to the Republicans now in Washington, journalists possess the social graces of Pony Express riders—resolution, ingenuity, punctuality. They bring the news from Ghent or California, and they do their readers no favor if they try to shape it into a work of literature. Maybe this is why the books that journalists feel compelled to write. about the war in Algeria or last year's election campaign, so often read like a definitive study of a formation of clouds

4. The critics of the press complain about its pessimism, its cynicism, its unwillingness to recommend a program of political advancement. Every now and then a reader of Harper's writes to say that the magazine should publish sermons. "Be more positive," says a correspondent in Oklahoma. "Imagine that you have been proclaimed king," says a corespondent in Florida, "and subm your blueprint for Utopia."

They send their requests to the wrong address. The reader in hor of inspiration can study the collecte works of St. Augustine or Bisho Paul Moore: he can listen to Bill Graham defy the foul fiend or sit i rapturous contemplation of an eld tree or a whale

William Randolph Hearst one complained to Dorothy Parker the her stories were too sad. To thi objection (not very different from the admonitions circulated by vic presidents in charge of public rela tions). Miss Parker replied:

"Mr. Hearst, there are two billio people on the face of the earth, an the story of not one of them wi

have a happy ending." If a man drinks too much and hi doctor tells him that one of thes days he will fall down dead in th club car on the way to Westport, i the doctor a pessimist? Is Israel pessimistic nation because it bomb the Iraqi nuclear installation south east of Baghdad, or is it an optimisti nation because it accepts the cond tions of its existence? Is it pessimisr to say that the theories of supply side economics have little basis i fact, or that American novelists don't

write very good novels? Journalism, like history, has n therapeutic value; it is better abl to diagnose than to cure, and it pro vides society with a primitive mean of psychoanalysis that allows the pa tient to judge the distance betwee fantasy and reality.

5. Why is it that people demand tone of optimism when discussin the large and safely abstract ques tions of national policy-what wa thought to be the splendid littl war in Vietnam, for example, o the incalculable benefit certain t derive from an economic policy the places an intolerable burden on th weak, the old, the poor, the igno rant, the young, and the sick? somebody advised the same peopl about their own prospects in s blithe a tone of voice they woul think they were talking to a chil or a fool.

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HE QUESTION is never one of optimism or pessimism. It is a question of trying to tell the truth, of the emotions equired of the teller and of the emotions the attempt calls forth in the eader. If the news, no matter how ad, evokes in the reader a sense of nergy and hope, then it has done s much as can be said for it. The nctuous recitation of platitudes usully achieves the opposite effect, intilling in the reader a feeling of assivity and despair.

Great power constitutes its own rgument, and it never has much rouble drumming up friends, aplause, sympathetic exigesis, and a and. In his commencement address t West Point last May, President leagan was pleased to announce that he American "era of self-doubt" ad come to a satisfactory end. The est of his speech could have been companied by a fanfare of trumets and drums.

But a democracy stands in need of as much self-doubt as it can muser and as many arguments as posible that run counter to the governing body of opinion. The press exerts he pressure of dissent on officials therwise inclined to rest content with the congratulations of their reainers. From the point of view of the Soviet authorities the Soviet press admirably optimistic; the era of elf-doubt ended with the revolution of 1917.

i. The press in its multiple voices urgues that the world of men and events can eventually be understood. Not yet, perhaps, not in time for omorrow's deadline, but sooner or ater, when enough people with access to better information have had an opportunity to expand the spheres of reference. This is an immensely uppeful and optimistic assumption. Defined as means rather than an end, journalism defends the future against the past.

7. The media offer for sale every conceivable fact or opinion. Most of these objects possess a dubious value, but it isn't the business of the journalist to distinguish between the significant and the worthless. During World War II British raiding units pressed far behind German lines in the North African desert in search of stray pieces of metal. The patrols collected anything that came to hand—a shell casing, a broken axle, a button torn from the uniform of a dead corporal. The objects were sent to Cairo for analysis, and by this means British intelligence guessed at the state of German industry.

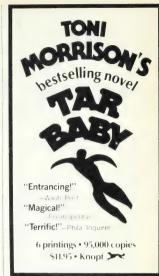
So also with journalism. The data are always fugitive and insufficient. To treat even the most respectable political ideas as if they were the offspring of pure reason would be to assign them, in Lewis, Namier's phrase, "a parentage about as mythological as that of Pallas Athene."

8. Without an audience, the media would cease to exist. Even if people don't read the same papers and periodicals, the media provide the connective tissue holding together the federation of contradictory interests that goes by the name of democracy. How else except through the instruments of the media could the surgeon and the labor leader, the ballerina and the stock-car driver form even a distorted image of one another? The media present a spectacle infinitely more crowded than Balzac's Comédie Humaine-the rumors of war on page one, followed, in random succession, by reports of strange crimes, political intrigues, anomalous discoveries in the sciences, the hazard of new fortunes.

Just as every nation supposedly gets "the government it deserves," so also it makes of the press whatever it chooses to imagine as its self-portrait. If the covers of all the nation's magazines could be displayed in a gallery, and if the majority of the images reflected dreams of wealth or sexual delight, a wandering Arab might be forgiven for thinking that the United States had confused itself with the Moslem vision of paradise.

The newspapers yield only as much as the reader brings to his reading. If the reader doesn't also study foreign affairs, or follow the money markets, or keep up his practice of foreign languages, then what can he expect to learn from the papers?

HARPER'S/AUGUST 1981





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### ENDING THE DACOITY MENACE

India's most frightful crime

by Simon Wincheste

NCE UPON a time, before the graybearded pedants of the civil rights movement stripped our nursery shelves of the books of Helen Bannerman. most American children probably knew what most British children still do, and that is the real meaning of the word mugger. Not, of course, the nomadic pillagers of today's Central Park, but the heavyset, flatnosed, and very violent dittos of the river Ganges-the members of the species Crocodilus biporcatus, the Indian crocodile, invariably found in Miss Bannerman's delightful but now banned books. The fullest definition of said reptile is to be found in a remarkable, very old, but still published book called Hobson-Jobson. the classic dictionary of Anglo-Indian, the bastard tongue that has given us words like pajama, bungalow, catamaran, pundit, cash, and mulligatawny. And mugger, of course, for I am sure that its contemporary use is derived from the ferocity. though not the snub noses, of many of the urban highwaypersons.

I find it both odd and pleasing that a peculiarly American form of modern crime has its linguistic roots in India. There is an irony, too, in

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the notion that ancient India has given the New World the name for a criminal event, for Hobson-Jobson, if cajoled correctly, will reveal details of a number of crimes that are peculiarly Indian in nature, and which have never spread beyond the subcontinent. The three most notorious, in descending order of rarity, are thuggee, suttee, and dacoity. They were going strong in the Ganges valley long before the average mugger, human or reptilian, was a glint in his great-grandfather's eve.

Once in a while one does read a report of an incident of suttee, where a widow, bent on voluntary self-immolation, will hurl herself on her late husband's funeral pyre. The British made the practice illegal during their brief rule in India. Indeed, like the smoking of opium, it is a practice once regarded as both natural and commonplace, but which was rendered criminal on the orders of foreign masters.

Before the British arrived, widows used to "offer" suttee (the word comes from the Sanskrit and means, literally, to "keep company"); once British rule was established, the grammar evolved to the point where widows "made" suttee; and by the time the courts decreed that this Brahminical rite be invested with the same degree of illegality as mere sui-

cide, the verb had changed to "commit" suttee. Thus does semantics par allel the evolution of law.

Thuggee, however, lavs claim to rather less of a sacred motive. Strict ly speaking, it is true, thugs per formed their ghastly deeds in propi tiation of a goddess. Kali, but while the Brahmin scholars would no quibble at the worth of suttee, fev would light candles for the habits of the thugs. The groups who would stalk innocent travelers along the Grand Trunk Road, inveigle their way into their confidences, and ther garrote and bury them according to a cruel and mystic ritual, won little sympathy, even in the most conser vative schools of Hindu thought When a tough English policeman Captain Sleeman, decided to make a determined nineteenth-century effor to rid the Ganges of the "menace of Thuggee," he was widely applauded. His methods were brutal, but there were no Amnesty International representatives in northern India a hundred years ago, and his 1867 report which claimed that "there are only 340 names remaining on the Official Register of Thugs," was greeted without question. Today there are no thugs, and the offense is as criminal under the modern Hindu regimes as it was under the moralizing Christian rule of yesterday.



UT DACOITY, to quote the tortured English of an Indian detective friend of mine, is a fish of a different kidney. The crime is still rife, and something of a menace even for non-Indians. for example, it afflicted a party of welve innocent Japanese visitors juite recently: they were riding westvard on the Lucknow Mail, an express train of deserved distinction. vhen it was rudely and suddenly topped in the middle of the night ind invaded by scores of masked, neavily armed men. The Tokyo toursts, who had probably imagined Inlia as a gentle sort of place, all sitar nusic and attar of roses, found themelves tied up and summarily relieved of their Sonys and Nikons and Yanahas by a gang that then disapseared into the night forever. "I am hinking we will be hearing that gang before we are seeing them again, aid my detective friend, with a trace of admiration in his voice.

The luckless band had suffered. hey were told later, from the attenions of one of India's most wayward rangs of dacoits, Hobson-Jobson, as well as Paragraph 395 of the Indian Penal Code, 1861, provides a legal lefinition of their plight, and of those who caused it: "A dacoit," says Hobson-Jobson, "is a robber belonging to an armed gang. . . . By law, to constitute a dacoity, there must be five or more in the gang committing the crime. It appears to be connected with Sanskrit dashta, meaning pressed together." The authors, who take as their lexicographical model the Oxford English Dictionary and like to quote historical uses of the word to show its evolution, found an 1812 example that sounds as though it were written vesterday: "Dacoits, a species of depredators who infest the country in gangs. . . . "

There is no great glamour attached to dacoity, however romantic its name. At least, there wasn't much glamour until about a year ago, when a new dacoit gang started pillaging and plundering and depredating northern India's villages—a gang run by a woman.

She is called Phoolan Devi, she is twenty-six years old, and if she manages to elude her pursuers—of whom, thanks to Delhi's annoyance, there are rather more than 2,000 in the field just now—she looks like ending up as legendary a figure as Lizzie Borden or one of the Salem witches. Already, as the *Indian Express* correspondent in Lucknow reports, she has achieved a certain standing:

The 26-year-old boatwoman, known as the Black Beauty, and who also styles herself Dasyu sundari—the beautiful dacoit—has a suspicion that the two dacoit brothers Ram Singh and Lala Ram Singh were responsible for the death of her master, Vikram Mallah, the boatman, who led a desperate gang of dacoits of which she was second-in-command in August last.

Phoolan Devi is believed to be instrumental in the bringing of no fewer than four gangs together for settling scores with the Rajput gangs, led by the Singhs, and with the police....

Miss Devi is described as "no beauty," and one policeman has suggested that she is "rather stout." She dresses in Western clothes—jeans, according to one rather shocked report—and has about fifty men under her spell. When we went hunting for her with some of the Indian policemen detailed to find her, she was supposed to be lurking in the deep ravines on the south side of the river Jumna, about a hundred miles downstream from the site of the Taj Mahal.

Miss Devi might have been no more than a slight local embarrassment for the forces of law in northern India, had it not been for the attack on the Japanese tourists and for a massacre the good lady managed to perpetrate last Valentine's Day in a village south of Cawnpore, where another, historically somewhat more memorable act of savagery took place in 1857, involving the slaughter of hundreds of English women and children, and their later entombment in the local well. But that, despite the memory, is another matter. Miss Devi's carnage is fresher in the Indian mind.

According to terrified women who still live in the little village of Behmai, Miss Devi's gang arrived there one afternoon, and, says the *Indian Express*, "all her dacoits were in police uniforms that accorded to their ranks in her gang. Phoolan Devi was in khaki jeans and a shirt. She knew the village well, and she herself selected the persons and herded them together at the residence of the village pradhan.

"After they had ransacked the houses of the thakurs and seized two licensed guns belonging to two Rajput families, those already captured were asked to march to the outskirts of the village. They were made to sit there in a line, and firing orders were issued. Twenty of the men were killed—seventeen of them Rajputs, related to the Singhs..."

T WAS, by all accounts, a fearful crime. It overstepped the boundaries of traditional dacoity and became a murder based on vengeance and caste hatred. And the one thing New Delhi does not want out in the jungles of India is yet another outbreak of caste conflict. There are enough problems to tax the police already: Hindu-Moslem unrest; strikes; endless rows over the Indian version of affirmative-action programs; quarrels with Pakistan; the constant infiltration of foreigners; wars with the settlers in Assam; the list is endless. Caste war, potentially the most serious of all internal conflicts lurking



beneath the surface of Indian society, must be kept down; Mrs. Gandhi, on hearing of Miss Devi's casteinspired slaughter, sent a message down the Ganges telegraph wire—a message that was translated into a hundred newspaper headlines: P.M. ORDERS: END THE DACOITY MENACE. The message went to Lucknow, the capital of Uttar Pradesh, from whence word was sent on to Agra and the headquarters of the one man recknoned wily and experienced enough to have a chance of capturing the Black Beauty of north India.

Send for the Poirot of the Plains, the Philo Vance of the Jumna valley, the instructions went—"Send for Inspector Singhal, Phoolan Devi's match!"

Bharatendu Prakash Singhal, Deputy Inspector-General of Police for Anti-Dacoity Operations, State of Uttar Pradesh, has been hunting down dacoits for the best part of his twenty-five years in the Indian police service. He is a portly man, well into his fifties; he smokes a pipe filled with a tobacco that smells far worse than its name Prince Albert Ready Rubbed. might lead one to think; he likes to keep his pistol tucked into his pocket: he will walk fifteen miles at a stretch in the hot Indian sun without complaining or calling for a drink; he manages to wear out jeeps at the rate (so far as I could see) of about three a week; and he is currently commanding twenty companies of heavily armed policemen who are, to quote the Indian Express once again, engaged in MASSIVE FLUSH-OUT OF JUMNA VALLEY RAVINES.

He was less than well served, one might think, by the circumstances in which he works. I first met him on a bridge spanning the river. It is a single-lane bridge, about half a mile long, and soldiers at each end regulate the traffic, letting northbound vehicles through for five minutes, southbound for five minutes, and so

on This particular day the man sending northbound traffic dozed off for a few moments, woke up, noticed the bridge was empty, or seemed to be, and ordered his line of traffic to proceed. As one can imagine a column of southbound traffic was halfway across the bridge at that very moment. Both columns met, and the traffic iam (try persuading a bullock cart loaded with half a ton of hav to reverse for four hundred yards) lasted two hours. Inspector Singhal was caught in it, having been alerted to travel "with the greatest possible speed" to a hamlet where Miss Devi had been spotted earlier that day. As it turned out, it was dark by the time he got there, and there was no trace of Black Beauty.

HERE WERE all manner of other frustrations: his jeep, for instance, suddenly stopped for no apparent reason. It might have been persuaded to start again had not one of the constables accompanying the inspector been seized with the bright idea of pouring an entire bottle of a gaily colored liquid into the air intake of one of the carburetors, following which the engine gurgled ominously and refused to emit another sound, or even to turn over. We found another vehicle, but it was out of fuel, and getting a gallon of gasoline turned out to be an event of magnificently subcontinental difficulty. The first gas station was manned by a fellow of at least ninety who was so deeply asleep he had to be prodded into life with a rifle butt. No, he had no fuel, but for fifty rupees he would give a piece of paper that would guarantee a gallon or two at his friend's service station a couple of miles up the road. After pushing the jeep there, and waking up another, vounger assistant (a mere octogenarian), it was found that the first piece of paper had not been signed in the proper place, and it was quite impossible for a single liter of spirit to be pumped into the jeep's tank. No, the fact that we were police did not hele the old man explained. Regulation were regulations. Inspector Singhal face, which is normally the color weathered teak, assumed the hue agunmetal, and gritting his teeth shard that sparks seemed to sprafrom his lips, he cursed: "Miss Dehas paid all these people off, yo can be sure. Damnable woman! Vibitch!" And worse.

The magic of Marconi had recen ly been brought to bear on the daco gangs, the inspector explained whe he regained his composure. The government in Lucknow had given whathe Indians call "walking-talking radio sets to constables on anti-decity patrols, in an attempt to boostheir efficiency. It would be pleasar to be able to record great and electronically enhanced success. But n such luck, thanks to, of all thing-language difficulties.

The constables are forced to giv their reports in English, in which they are rarely competent; transla tions have to be given them by any one in the patrol who is. The men a company headquarters have to tran scribe the information in English which they seldom speak with an agility, either. They then have to pas the messages on, again in English to operational HO, where Inspecto Singhal sits. A polyglot amalgam of fractured syntax and misspelling, the effects of the ionosphere, and plain misunderstanding, leads to the final reception of messages that have a much relation to the content of the original as the last and first in a Chi nese Whispers chain played from Trenton to Spuyten Duyvil. "It is very difficult," the inspector laments at the end of one frustrating day "But I will get the damned woman vou can be sure of that."



IS LAMENT was offered in a setting of quintessentially Indian contrast. We were on a terrace outside his emporary HO, an old treasury built the sixteenth century for some ong-forgotten Mughal prince, and erched on the edge of a cliff a hunred feet above the Jumna. The terace was decorated with bougainvila and canna lilies; down below erons glided over the still, cool waers of the Jumna, while the cries of irmers gently paddling their couny-boats downstream sounded, birdke, in the still air. Above us kites hirled soundlessly in the thermal arrents, and a family of monkeys aited in a nearby tree, hoping we ould go, leaving the terrace for iem and their endless games.

Phoolan Devi and her murderous abits seemed a long, long way off, he fate of the poor Japanese genemen, and the more violent fate of the Behmai villagers, seemed to beong to another age and another orld. Dacoity, like thuggee and sutter, seemed mere figments of historial memory, suitable for inclusion thobson-lobson, to be remarked in at dinner parties, or by solvers of the better crossword puzzles.

But then, suddenly, the inspector's DC came panting up the hill, sated, and engaged Mr. Singhal in uffled conversation. Singhal stood p, straightened his tie, and slipped is revolver into his pocket. "A new port, old man. Must go. They say tey've seen her. Just heard on the ireless. She's supposed to be on the ther side of the river this time."

Would the jeep start? Would the ridge over the Jumna take one hour cross, or three? Would Inspector inghal get his woman? You'll not nd the answer in The New York 'imes, nor, I'm sorry to say, in Harer's. The CBS morning news will ive the item a miss, if it ever comes 1. It will be in the Indian Express, f course. It may even make the avel notes in Asahi Shimbun. And laybe, just maybe, if Inspector inghal does for dacoity what Capain Sleeman did for thuggee, it will e in an edition of Hobson-Jobson. alf a century or so from now.

HARPER'S/AUGUST 1981

THERE ARE THREE QUESTIONS
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...IN A LOVE STORY.



### OILING THE MACHINE

The education of Alfonse D'Amato

by Jonathan Kwitn

HE CONSERVATIVE tide that swept the country last November produced no more astonishing upset than the election of Alfonse D'Amato, an obscure local politician from Long Island, to the office of United States senator from New York. His election was all the more astonishing because his campaign, conducted in the journalism capital of the world, was such a successful misportrayal.

D'Amato ran as a Reaganite, whose ten years in elected office in the suburbs had been spent pruning government waste and unburdening taxpayers—a fitting background for the new conservatism of the Eighties. But from the beginning of the campaign there was abundant evidence that the senator-to-be's past betrayed his punctilious image.

In the campaign's closing weeks it was known—though not widely published—that several state and federal prosecutors and grand juries were looking into affairs that D'Amato had

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helped preside over as chief executive of the Town of Hempstead and a member of the governing board of surrounding Nassau County. These affairs had cost the taxpayers dearly. They involved graft, nepotism, and illegal patronage.

Perhaps the real scandal of the D'Amato candidacy is that what was known before the election wasn't widely published. The story of Al D'Amato's foibles and alleged foibles did run, at great length, in the Village Voice, a New York City weekly. Some of the Voice's reporting was inaccurate or unfair, but, on reconstruction, most of the long gray columns the Voice ran seem on target.

The state's major newspapers did some sniffing around, but never printed the story. Newsday, the Long Island paper, had produced dogged investigative reports on D'Amato in the past (several years ago a Newsday exposé aborted a plan under which a company partially owned by D'Amato's father and brother would have gotten a county maintenance contract that D'Amato himself, as head of the related county gov-

ernment committee, would have controlled). For the senatorial election last year, however, Newsday chosto concentrate on the candidate daily campaign activities. Nor distelevision pick up on leads from the Voice. Why?

The problem wasn't incompetence The New York Times, for example assigned an award-winning staffer t the hunt. According to District A torney Denis Dillon, the only Den ocrat to hold high office in Nassa County, "The newspapers in Ne York started focusing on whether h [D'Amato] committed a crime. whether he was going to be indicted And that really wasn't the point. Th point is whether a man who preside over all these abuses as supervisor Hempstead should be elected. If w get down to whether a politician ha committed a crime, and that's th only issue, we've reached a prett sorry state." A good distinction.

NLIKE THE ABSCAM crook there's no evidence that A D'Amato pocketed and thing. He is, however, the product of a new kind of corrupolitical machine in America. It based in the suburbs and run by R publicans, but it is already taking u where Tammany Hall and Mayo Daley left off.

Thanks to the mass appeal of conservative rhetoric, D'Amato is not an important senator. He chairs sulter committees overseeing the securities industry (which the Reagan admin istration wants to deregulate) and the District of Columbia (whose main industry the administration



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wants to curtail). Those around D'Amato say he wants to be the first U.S. president of Italian descent and already is planning a vice-presidential bid in 1984, with no worse prospects than he had of being U.S. senator three years ago.

But if we look behind the conservative rhetoric, we find in Nassau County a patronage-laden, one-party political system that doles out welfare to the rich and cheats those taxpavers who won't play the game. Senator D'Amato's entire career has been as an operating cog in that political machine. He hasn't been a particularly greedy cog. He appears to live, as he says, well within his official salary, with his wife and four children in a house he bought twelve years ago for \$28,000, his family's newest car a 1978 Mercury. Nor has he been a particularly sinister coghe even claims to have reformed some of the machine's seedier practices. But he hasn't been a reluctant cog, either.

For example, there is the way his campaign was financed. Nassau County must surely be one of the few places in America where CETA employees donate hundreds of dollars from their precious, federally subsidized incomes to a conservative Republican Senate candidate who has pledged to slash government spending. CETA, the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, is a taxpayer-funded program to give job training to the "disadvantaged" and "long-term unemployed."

"When you believe in something, you make a lot of sacrifices," says Helen Maggio, a widow and CETApaid "research aide" for Hempstead. So on January 11, 1980, soon after D'Amato announced his seemingly prayerless Senate candidacy, Mrs. Maggio sacrificed \$800 of her \$14,500-a-year-before-taxes salary to his campaign. Geraldine Nolan, a \$16,000-a-year CETA "planner," who is twenty-six and single, also gave \$750 on January 11—"to support my party," she says. Only \$50 of such gifts can be used as tax credit.

A cursory check of federal campaign records turned up at least seven CETA employees who gave between \$250 and \$800 on the same date, including Candice Dunninger, twenty-three and single, a \$12,000-a-year "researcher," who gave \$250. Says Ms. Dunninger, "I belong to the Republican party. I don't really go to the meetings, it's just that I hang out with Republicans." Ms. Dunninger has since been promoted to a \$16,000-a-year non-CETA job with the county sheriff. President Reagan has asked Congress to do away with CETA.

All three of these women say they gave spontaneously, without solicitation, as soon as they heard D'Amato was running, just because they believed in him. So do many other local-government employees who tithed to the machine and its Senate candidate.

For his part, D'Amato says, "Maybe they contributed because I was able to keep that system going in a way that was favorable."

Favorable to whom? D'Amato's old office in the Hempstead Town Hall is surrounded by a blighted area of closed-down storefronts and goingout-of-business sales on whose streets are seen unemployed people of the sort CETA was designed to help. But D'Amato concedes that under his control the town may have awarded most of the CETA jobs to people with Republican party connections. "The GOP was more efficient in alerting its friends to apply for CETA aid," he says. Thus many CETA jobs, he admits, went to the children of relatively well-to-do Republican families. In fact, D'Amato adds, some of these sons and daughters of his supporters and associates, in order to get their CETA jobs, had to lie about their household incomes by saving that they had moved away from home when they hadn't.

Rather than express outrage at such perjury, Senator D'Amato recently argued that the law should be relaxed so that middle-class kids could legally qualify for federal job aid.

There is no reason to believe that the three women mentioned above broke any laws to get their public jobs, nor is there evidence that D'Amato illegally solicited contributions for jobs as a specific quid pro quo.

NCE A corrupt system is e tablished, like the Mafia, o Tammany Hall, or the Na sau County Republican Con mittee, it tends to feed on itself. It reputation does its talking, and any way, most of the favored slots the are available have already been fille by insiders, people known to h willing, and even eager, to play ball people who by and large don't nee to be told anything. Federal and stat disclosure records of D'Amato's can paigns are rife with major donation from low-paid public workers ( bridge operator gave \$500 last year a county nurse, \$1,000), to say not ing of the many large gifts from to administrators and well-paid privat contractors doing business with th town or county. (\$1,000 is the max imum personal gift allowed by law all gifts of \$100 or more must b reported.)

Myles H. Tanenbaum, a partner in and executive vice president of Kray co Inc., a real-estate managemen firm in King of Prussia, Pennsylva nia, is an example. "We were plan ning to expand an existing shopping mall [in Hempstead]," he says. "You have to go through various steps. One such step, if the town demand it and the state approves, is filing costly environmental-impact state ment. Says Tanenbaum, "Our con sultant on environmental issues tole us [that under the law] we did no have to file," Nevertheless, he adds "We were solicited by mail by Ar mand P. D'Amato [the senator' brother, a Nassau County lawyer and state assemblyman | for a contribu tion" to the Senate campaign. Kray co was also solicited, Tanenbaum says, by its own Nassau County law ver, who happened to be the Repub lican mayor of Valley Stream, a town

property in Hempstead.

The wording of both these so licitations, taken in isolation, seem perfectly innocent. For his part Myles Tanenbaum leaves no doub that he gave the \$500 to D'Ama to's campaign on February 23, 1980 with full and enthusiastic belief ir the conservative cause. "I hear the 'Star Spangled Banner' sometime and I cry—there's no place else in

that abuts on the shopping-center

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the world where I could have accomplished what I've accomplished," Tanenbaum says. Whether the six other Krayco executives, who also live in Pennsylvania and who gave identical gifts to D'Amato (except one, who gave only \$250) on exactly the same date, were acting out of a completely spontaneous devotion to conservative ideals is another question. But even Tanenhaum says. "Obviously when you give political contributions it's because you want your guy in power rather than some other guy. At least when you go up to the king you don't have two strikes against you. That's the system we've created out there. So what's the favor? That he's going to listen to you? Or that you own him?". Tanenbaum. insists that, in his case, it's only the listening, and this is plausible. Even so. Krayco didn't have to file an environmental-impact statement. And you have to wonder how much it should cost in a democracy for the right to be listened to.

D'Amato, scarcely known outside Nassau County, managed to raise funds in pace with his two widely known opponents, four-term Sen. Jacob Javits and four-term Rep. Elizabeth Holtzman. According to incomplete figures at the campaign's close, he appeared to have raised more than either. Back in 1977, when he ran for presiding supervisor of Hempstead, a kind of combination mayor and city-council president, Newsday reported that he raised

\$192,000, ten times as much as the previous Republican candidate and a hundred times as much as his token Democratic opponent.

A 1975 report on patronage issued by the New York State Civil Service Commission described Hempstead as "without exception the worst of any of the 108 local civil service agencies" that the commission monitors More than half the workers were classified as "provisional" and thus excluded from civil service. Since 1970. D'Amato had been one of two Hempstead "supervisors," who, besides running the town, tend to control the population-weighted board of supervisors that governs Nassau County, Hempstead has 800,000 people, more than Boston, Washington, or San Francisco

During D'Amato's years in office, Hempstead spent millions of taxpaver dollars to spruce up and maintain two of its three public beaches for the use of families that rent one of the 800 luxury cabanas the town owns. D'Amato concedes that Republican insiders were given first crack at renting the cabanas and gobbled them up. He says cabana rental now is done on a first-come. first-served basis, though he admits that the waiting time for one is seven years. Outsiders complain that half of Hempstead's public beach land is nothing but a private Republican social club.

To be sure, the cabana system, like the patronage system, long predated

D'Amato's stewardship. The curren Republican administration in th county took office in 1969, but evel before, most county officeholder were Republicans. The machine wa headed, then as now, by boss Josepl Margiotta, a Hempstead lawyer.

'AMATO never knew any career but the machine. After graduating from law school in 1961, he was recommended by the local state assembly man, Joseph Carlino, a family friend for a job as law clerk in the county attorney's office. From there he went to the family court as law assistan for a couple of years, then to the Hempstead town attorney's office. In 1969 he became server of taxes and then moved his way up to town and county supervisor.

Of course, some participants in such a system are corrupted less, of at least less permanently, than others. Honest federal officials no doub have emerged from Chicago, Philadelphia, New Jersey, and Maryland Harry Truman emerged from Pendergast-ruled Kansas City. But there aren't any accounts that Truman per sonally tainted himself in the way that D'Amato and his family repeat edly have.

Not shown in a campaign commer cial that featured D'Amato's mother for example, was the candidate's fa ther, Armand M. D'Amato, Without the rigors of a civil-service exam bu with his son's help, the elder D'Amate became research director for the Nassau County department of commerce and industry in 1972. The job now pays him \$34,000 a year so tha he can, in his words, "keep abreas of the current statistics in the field of economics as they apply to the County of Nassau." He also edits the department newsletter. It's a full time job, he says, but "on nights and weekends" he still manages to keer up the insurance agency he's owned for forty-three years. Among its longtime clients is the Village of Island Park, a subunit of Hempstead.

According to charges by the State Commission of Investigation, and more recently by a federal grand jury, the commissions from insur-



ance purchases by Nassau County's various governments have for many years provided a kickback pool from which the county Republican leader passes out millions of taxpayer dolars to reward dozens of selected brokers who help elect Republicans. In fact, according to local political observers, although the formal charges have never been so specific, the kickpack pool is distributed on a ratio exactly corresponding to the number of Republican votes cast in each broker's district in the most recent elec-

Shortly after last November's elecion, county Republican leader Joseph Margiotta and another Nassau politician—a former judge—were ndicted in federal court in Brooklyn on charges that they had defrauded he county through this insurance scheme. The indictment directly imolicates Senator D'Amato in the aleged plot, though he wasn't charged. Three of the six counts of the indictment clearly state that the foundation of the alleged insurance scheme was the "reasonable belief" by insurance providers "that the Presiding Supervisor of the Town of Hempstead ... would appoint or dismiss as Broker of Record for the Town of Hempstead . . . any person whom the defendant Joseph M. Margiotta told [him] to appoint or dismiss," and that if an insurance provider "did not make and continue to make the payments as directed by the defendant Joseph M. Margiotta, it would not be appointed as Broker of Record for the Town of Hempstead...."

Between January 1977 and December 1979, a period covered by the three counts, the only presiding supervisor Hempstead had was Al-

fonse D'Amato.

The senator denies wrongdoing in the matter, but won't comment further. Both he and his father testified before the grand jury that indicted Mr. Margiotta, but both declined a request to make their testimony public for this article. As for his son's helping him to a \$34,000-a-year public job, the elder D'Amato says, "If my son didn't help me, then he's not deserving of a good father."

Mr. Margiotta's trial ended last spring with a hung jury.



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NOTHER RECURRING scandal has been the routine collection of contributions to the Republican party from local and county employees at the rate of one percent of their government salaries. Senator D'Amato and others dispute that the contributions were ever forced. But in 1977 three Hempstead town commissioners were convicted of collecting contributions illegally from road workers clerks and other employees in their departments (a local judge discharged the guilty commissioners without penalty: they are appealing anyway). One commissioner retired, but D'Amato kept the other two in their jobs.

Testifying in 1975 before a grand jury investigating the commissioners, D'Amato was asked about the one-percent policy and responded that "no one" had ever "made known that type of policy [to him] and I think if it is the case... I would certainly use my influence to see to it that it would not be collected."

In last fall's campaign, however, an old letter surfaced that indicates otherwise. In 1971 D'Amato wrote to a local Republican leader, "I have spoken to Mr. Margiotta and he has indicated to me that the raise for ... would be approved if he took care of the 1 percent. Accordingly, please find a check for \$75."

Asked recently about the apparent conflict between this letter and his sworn testimony, Senator D'Amato said that in the 1971 case he had merely been trying to do the man, a sanitation worker, a favor. "What I did was put up \$75 for that man so he could get what he was entitled to [the raise]," D'Amato said. "I in no way asked him for that money. I never would. No one should be compelled to give in order to get what he's entitled to." He said the letter was "in no way in conflict" with his sworn testimony, that he didn't know of any policy requiring a gift to get a raise. "I'm not going to quibble with you over it," he said.

Other parts of that 1975 grandjury testimony illuminate D'Amato's general attitude toward machine politics. "No one ever came to me... and said to me that you had to give," he testified. "But there is a general knowledge which really permeated the area that a one-percent contribution did serve as a guideline.... This goes back to when I started in, I guess, 1961.... They were very tough economic times. I used to take home \$83 a week. Let me tell you when you talk about \$83 a week and a wife and child and a car and a little apartment, things were rough and so to give \$10 or \$20 was a lot of money at that time. But I did...."

D'Amato says the one-percent system ended after the 1977 convictions were upheld, but system or no system, the workers, contractors, and businessmen seeking favors from the town or county still seem to be anteing up. Substantial D'Amato campaign gifts came from local businessmen who lease to the town its trucking fleet without competitive bidding (if the town purchased trucks, as most towns do, instead of leasing them, state law would require competitive bidding; reporter Dan Hertzberg of Newsday, and now the Wall Street Journal, once identified fifty-seven Republican committeemen or members of their families who rented trucks to Hempstead).

Gifts came to the D'Amato campaign from people with recently awarded contracts to operate restaurants and golf concessions on town property under what appear to be favorable terms. They came from a family that owns disco bars, operating without required town permits, where major drug deals have been uncovered. Some businessmen and public employees gave up to the legal limit within a few days of receiving raises, promotions, tax abatements, or other benefits. Senator D'Amato says the timing links were coincidental.

The D'Amato campaign got loans below the prime interest rates that were apparently unavailable to his leading opponent, Representative Holtzman—from the Bank of New York. Town records indicate the bank, long D'Amato's personal bank, received the largest share of the \$847 million that the Hempstead tax receiver deposited in non-interest-bearing accounts (free money for the banks) in the most recent fiscal year. These no-interest deposits were crit-

icized by a 1978 state grand jur and Senator D'Amato acknowledghe may have helped solicit party co tributions from the recipient bank though not recently.

ROSECUTOR DILLON describe most of D'Amato's allege activities as "legal graft. which he says he can't pros cute. In his words: "You have a ne litical party out here that gives of jobs and takes back donations. Ther are people who are politicians, no educators, who are teaching over Nassau Community College, I don know many politicians who do bus ness with contractors who don't tak contributions from contractors. It an abuse of the taxpayer. But unles I can show there's some kind of force or threat being used, or that done tions are being collected on publiproperty. I can't prosecute."

He talks about prosecuting the one-percent racket in 1977. "Ther was extortion involved. Foreme were making threats, You say every body knows about it. What are was upposed to do—go into court and tell the jury everybody knows about it? The only way we could get ther was for collecting on public property. And what did they wind up with, these guys? Unconditional discharges. And they're still commis

sioners!'

Such was the basis for a Justice Department investigation of D'Ama to's campaign financing, announced shortly after the election. Meanwhile Dillon briefly investigated (ther dropped, for lack of any apparen criminal violation) Senator D'Amato's role in the award of a cable-televi sion franchise in July 1980, withou public announcement, discussion, or bidding. The franchise went to concern 20-percent owned by the law firm of Joseph Margiotta, and by another major contributor to the county GOP and to the D'Amatc campaign. D'Amato defends the award on the grounds that the town was just transferring a franchise that had originally been awarded many years ago, after bidding, to a firm that later became defunct. He says he knew about Margiotta's interest

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in the successor firm, though other members of the town board who voted may not have known.

The Margiotta concern is associated with Cox Cable Communications, Inc. Robert Wright, president of Cox, declines to say what the Margiotta law firm paid for its potentially lucrative interest. "I don't think they paid a great deal. I don't know that I'd like to go into it," he says, Chuck Dolan, chief executive of Cablevision Systems Development Co., Cox's main competition on Long Island, is furious, "It seemed incredible to us." he says. "We assume that an action like that would be taken like that only to accommodate somebody they would want to accommodate." Republican leader Margiotta? "Totally, obviously," he says. A former employee of Cox who participated in the making of the deal says that the Margiotta group stands to make \$500 for every home that connects to the system—the going rate for the resale of cable-TV stock. "He's going to make a lot of money -I mean a lot of money," the exemployee says.

Senator D'Amato's name has also come up in criminal grand-jury investigations concerning a huge kickback operation at a scandal-ridden \$137-million recycling plant in Hempstead, which D'Amato personally sponsored and pushed through.

One man convicted, in federal court on Long Island, is George Boylin, a prominent labor leader found to have taken hundreds of thousands of dollars in illegal payoffs on the recycling plant and other jobs. Evidence at his trial, and elsewhere, indicates that a broad scheme was afoot. It worked this way:

The recycling plant was being built by Parsons & Whittemore, an international construction firm D'Amato had brought in. (Parsons & Whittemore had been assured of the job because bidding specifications called for a process that only Parsons & Whittemore had; company officials, of course, have given generously to the Nassau Republican party and to D'Amato campaigns.) Boylin and other union leaders began creating labor problems at the worksite, causing expensive delays. Two local fixers

approached the beleaguered Parsons & Whittemore plant manager, a man whom D'Amato says he "knew well," and who the company says has been fired "under a cloud of suspicion." The two middlemen, whom D'Amato says he doesn't know, persuaded the plant manager to let them supply him with contractors who would cost a lot, but who would be acceptable to the unions.

Construction proceeded, but with huge cost overruns, and the plant has now been closed because of high recycling prices and toxic emissions.

One witness testified that he was told some of the payoff money was to go to D'Amato, though there wasn't any evidence that D'Amato actually took any. The senator says he knows nothing about payoffs. But he acknowledges that both he and the town sanitation commissioner William Landman, referred many contractors to Parsons & Whittemore. Landman was one of the commissioners convicted in the one-percent political-contribution racket in 1977. But Landman says the recyclingplant job referrals he was making at about the same time had nothing to do with contributions.

Lasked Parsons & Whittemore for comment, and was referred to a source outside the company but intimately familiar with its operations. who requested that his name not be used, Asked if Parsons & Whittemore was forced to hire unwanted subcontractors who may have made political payoffs, the source replied, "Nobody ever said in so many words you gotta do this, but there were suggestions. It was clear that the Town of Hempstead, meaning the presiding supervisor, now our eminent senator, would send Parsons & Whittemore letters saying these are qualified people, he's a good person," The source said the company was telling its story to a federal grand jury in January 1981.

ENATOR D'AMATO'S basic response to all this is to point to his hard work and personal sobriety, and to argue that he tried to improve the system while working within it. He credits him-

self with "dealing with these situations—and they were abuses—worse than abuses, irregularities—and from your point of view they could be called more than irregularities—think I dealt with them." Shortly be fore he left office, he points out Hempstead began to self-insure (cutting down on the commissions), to put its tax receipts in interest-bearing accounts, to put more jobs under civil-service exam, and even to award any abandoned beach cabanas to the longest-waiting applicant.

But those closest to the senator concede that some or all of the "reforms" came only because of pressure by outside investigators: D.A. Dillon, for example, seized a copy of the waiting list for beach cabanas Nor does anyone contend that the "reforms" have abolished machine politics in Nassau County.

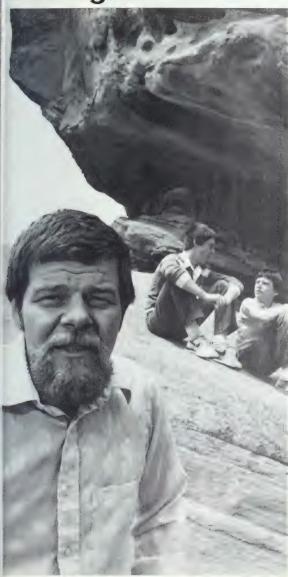
At the very least, the whole business calls into question the true conservatism of D'Amato or of anyone who comes out of such a system Mario Colleluori, president of the Taxpayers Union of Long Island who considers himself a true conservative, says that D'Amato in office was "anything but" a genuine conservative.

"During our attempts to lower taxes here in Nassau County, I regret to say that Mr. D'Amato was not of much help," Colleluori says. "We are the highest-taxed county in the country [a frequently stated 'fact,' probably not far off the mark], and he's been involved in running the county for twelve years.... This is something that the taxpayers will one day realize.

"Where people tolerate a oneparty system, relationships begin to emerge between businessmen and government, favors go back and forth, and the taxpayers are the ones paying the bills. In Nassau County it happens to be Republican. If it were Democratic it would be the same thing. Those elected officials who participate in it, condone it, and tolerate it are part of that system. They cannot separate themselves from that system. D'Amato is part and parcel of the system. Mr. D'Amato is a beneficiary of it."

HARPER'S/AUGUST 1981

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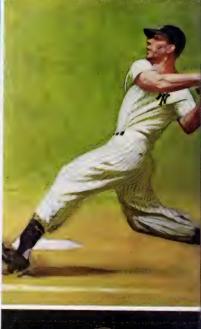
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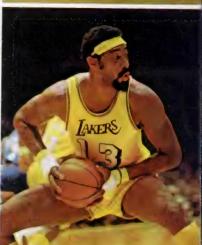
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(top left) Glies Litho Company, JAMES J. CORBETT DEFENDING HIS TITLE AGAINST CHARLIE MITCHELL. 1893.
Cho age-Hatorical Society (top center) Photograph of JIM RYUN by RICH CLARKSON. 1966 (top might Horieve Dinnerstein. 1HH WIDE SWING, 1975. Capprenn Galleine, Bethevalo Maryland Loborn left Photograph of PEGGY FLEMING by John G. Zammerman, 1968 (bottom center) Photograph of WILT CHAMBER (All No by WALTER ICOSS. JR. 1972. (bottom right) Miguel Coournabias, RELEX WILLS. c. 1972. (Homanities Research Center, Dinnerstay of Fexos at Austin. CPhilip Morris Inc. 1981)



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### FAREWELL, MONROE DOCTRINE

Three dates of change in Latin America

by Carlos Fuentes

N 1960, C. Wright Mills visited the newly created school of political science at the National University of Mexico. For most of the students and teachers of government of my generation, this was their first contact with the intelligentsia of the United States. The residue of good feeling left by the Roosevelt era had died in Guatemala; the majority of universities and scientific and cultural organizations in Latin America had sided with the Guatemalan revolutionaries and had decided to shun their U.S. counterparts after the invasion of 1954. This was the result of disillusionment, of outrage, and even of a certain confusion.

In 1954 an invasion of Guatemala had taken place. It was nominally headed by a putschist colonel, Carlos Castillo Armas. It had been carefully planned by the American ambassador, John Peurifoy. It was armed, launched, and then consolidated in power by the United States Central Intelligence Agency. It permitted the secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, to gloat over what he called "a glorious victory."

A "glorious victory" over what? According to the U.S. government it was communist influence in Guatemala, the communist-inspired government of Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán. A "glorious victory" for what? For the unilaterally proclaimed Monroe Doctrine—this Monroe Doctrine that periodically and conveniently pops out of the ghost-closet of the U.S. government until it meets its spectral sibling, the Brezhnev Doctrine; this Monroe Doctrine that would ban extracontinental interventions in

this hemisphere but not extracontinental interventions by the United States in other hemispheres and most assuredly not in this one, its backyard, its most immediate sphere of influence, Latin America; this Monroe Doctrine that ironically and conveniently forgets that if a Monroe Doctrine had been in effect in 1776, the United States would not exist. There was more evidence of French intervention in the North American War of Independence than there is or, I fear, ever shall be of Soviet intervention in the Salvadoran civil war.

1954: a glorious victory against democracy in the name of democracy. The victory of that extraordinary mixture of malice and innocence, arrogance and ignorance that has, as a rule, characterized Washington's policies in Latin America.

OW MANY people in this country, except a few specialists (certainly not the policymakers themselves), knew the political traditions and cultural realities of Guatemala in 1954 or know those of El Salvador in 1981? How many were aware of Guatemala's troubled history, the background it shared with Latin America: conquest and colonization in the sixteenth century, legal independence and economic dependency since the nineteenth century, and, also since the nineteenth century, the heritage of our perennial struggle between civilization and barbarismthe basic dilemma of our nations, far beyond ideological nitpicking and strategic posturing —this demand that we choose between civiliza-

Carlos Fuentes, former Mexican ambassador to France, is the author of numerous articles, short stories, and novels. His next novel, Distant Relations, will be published in the fall by Farrar, Straus and Giroux. Carlos Fuentes
FAREWELL,
MONROE
DOCTRINE

tion, the respect due to a man's hands, a woman's sex, or a child's eyes, or barbarism and the brutality that humiliates, tortures, and then murders us all?

How many citizens of this country were aware, in 1954 or today, of the dramatic struggles in Guatemala, throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, between the liberalism of Francisco Morazán and the return to colonial privilege and exploitation under the military chieftain and lifetime president, Rafael Carrera; of the liberal reforms introduced by Justo Rufino Barrios after Carrera's death; of the fight against aristocratic privileges, for the separation of church and state, and for universal education?

And if these realities were ignored, how dare the faraway government of the United States rush in as if it knew them intimately and were capable of acting in the best interests of a people who alone understood the dynamics of their own history, their own contradictions, their family affairs?

How many people in the United States, as Dulles celebrated the "glorious victory," could recall the twenty-two-year-long dictatorship of Manuel Estrada Cabrera, built on repression and the piecemeal surrender of the country to the United Fruit Company—until in 1920 Congress declared the president insane? How many could remember the fourteen-year-long dictatorship of Jorge Ubico, the gerontocratic "easy rider" who militarized Guatemala on Mussolini's model, right down to the elementary schools?

How many, finally, knew and understood that the general strike of 1944, the Central American "Solidarity" movement of its day, gave birth to the first twentieth-century democracy in Guatemala, the successive governments of Juan José Arévalo and Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán, the creation of a labor code, social security, a free school system, and agrarian reform?

Democracy in Guatemala in the 1940s and 1950s meant the massive transfer of power from the army to the labor and peasant organizations. I stress its importance because if Guatemalan democracy had been allowed to persist it would have influenced democracy in El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua, and would then have met Costa Rican democracy; perhaps a truly Central American model would have been born of this experience. Instead, the experience was aborted with callous, imperial blindness; the price is being paid today, in money and blood, in El Salvador.

Democracy in Guatemala, democracy in Nicaragua, democracy in El Salvador was born, is being born, shall be born of the local experiences of Spanish conquest and colonization, formal independence, economic dependency, liberal reforms, and dictatorial repression. In 1954, these Guatemalan experiences were violated and corrupted by the CIA invasion. This was the *only* non-Guatemalan experience suffered by Guatemala. The rest was, as ever, malice and ignorance, innocence and arrogance.

1954 was an important year for the men and women of my generation because the hopes for Franklin Roosevelt's Good Neighbor Policy—which, with political imagination and pragmatic respect for nonintervention, had met the dramatic challenge of the Mexican Revolution under President Lázaro Cárdenas, thus ensuring collaboration within the Western hemisphere against the Axis—were now buried inside an iceberg that not even the warm waters of the Caribbean could melt.

It was an important year, because it proved how uneven was the balance of forces in the hemisphere at the time. The Dulles resolution against Guatemala at the Caracas Inter-American Conference was approved almost unanimously, with only two abstaining votes: those of Mexico and Uruguay. Mexico paid for its unruliness with the economic pressures exerted on it by the Eisenhower administration: the flight of capital and the devaluation of the presonant.

It was an important year, 1954, because political development in Guatemala was not merely interrupted by violent foreign intervention: it has been continually perverted and poisoned down to this very day. Today Guatemala is a terrorist nation; the principal terrorist is the government of General Lucas García, and the violence that exists there stretches to the extremes of indiscriminate murder of political leaders, abduction of dissidents, torture of their families, torture of missionaries and other social workers, the moral prostitution of young Indians forced to deny their heritage, insult their parents in public, and become murderous goons of the dictatorship.

### The isolation of Cuba

HEN SOME OF US met C. Wright Mills in Mexico in 1961, my second date, we realized that we should distinguish between the actions of the U.S. government and those of the democratic polity in this country. We realized that the best interests of democracy in the U.S. and Latin America were served not by isolation but rather by a willingness to

build bridges and make sure that communication was kept alive above and beyond visa restrictions, prejudices, and honest differences of opinion.

"Keep in touch," said Mills back in 1961.
"We need you and maybe you'll need us." He added: "I tell gringos that when they come to Mexico they should keep away from the stones. There are too many beautiful stones in Mexico and they distract you from the people. Stick to the people." And he also said, "Do things your way. Don't sit forever waiting to see what the U.S. will do or won't do. To hell with the United States: do your own stuff."

Aye, there's the rub: that when Latin America does not "do its own stuff," it is accused of being composed of a bunch of shiftless, whining, grumbling, irresponsible beggars who throw all the blame for their native problems on the shoulders of the United States.

But when we do do something about our condition, we are accused of being communist agents and Soviet-trained terrorists, a subversive menace in the very backyard of the United States. We are then worthy only of being bombed back into the underdevelopment we should never have left. If ever there was an international Catch-22, it is surely this

At the beginning of the 1960s, the Cuban revolutionaries were experimenting with self-government. Instead of respecting them, as the Roosevelt administration had done in Mexico's case, the Eisenhower administration slammed the door in Cuba's face, countered every internal revolutionary reform with U.S. sanctions and propaganda, and prepared the invasion plans, again conceived by the CIA, which the Kennedy administration inherited and sent to defeat at the Bay of Pigs.

But as 1962 dawned, the balance of power had changed. At the Punta del Este Conference in late January, the United States tried to ram through the collective decision to break relations with Cuba, expel her government from the OAS, and launch a barrage of economic and political sanctions against the Castro regime.

Once again it was Mexico, this time standing quite alone, which refused to go along with a decision it judged legally unfounded and politically foolish. But this time the distribution of forces in the world was different. The López Mateos administration in Mexico could make a show of alliance with Gaullist France and with the leaders of the nonaligned movement, establish trade with communist bloc countries, and nationalize Americanowned utilities.

"The cold war had killed the Good Neighbor Policy. Its consequences became frighteningly evident during the October missile crisis."



Carlos Fuentes
FAREWELL,
MONROE
DOCTRINE

I was in Havana the day the first Soviet tanker sailed into the harbor, bringing the Cuban government the oil it would otherwise have been denied. This was the price of its refusal to knuckle under to U.S. sanctions. I said to myself then that the history of our continent, for better or worse, had changed forever. The cold war had killed the Good Neighbor Policy. Its consequences became frighteningly evident during the October missile crisis.

I also told myself that Latin America should never again allow itself to be put in the quandary of having to choose between the United States and the Soviet Union: that the next revolution should find conditions that would offer a choice among different sources of economic and political support. Those revolutions have now come, first in Nicaragua and now in El Salvador. They have come about for the same reasons that they came to the thirteen colonies in 1776, to France in 1789, to Mexico in 1910, to Russia in 1917, to Guatemala in 1944, to China in 1948, to Bolivia and Cuba in the 1950s, and to the whole colonized world in the aftermath of World War II: for reasons rooted in the local culture, history, and economy; in the heavens and hells of a people's imagination, its memory, its hopes, its self.

HE PROBLEMS in El Salvador in 1981, my third date, have been around for five centuries; their name is colonialism, the internal colonialism of the traditional ruling class and the external colonialism inherent in client-state relations.

El Salvador shares with Guatemala, and Nicaragua under the Somozas-indeed, to some degree, with all of Latin America-problems that existed a long time before the United States or the Soviet Union came into being, problems as old as the discovery of the New World, Our lands were not only discovered and colonized; they were conquered, and conquest plus colonization spells what Max Weber called patrimonialism, a condition brought on by the confusion of all public and private rights in favor of the chieftain and his clan of relatives. favorites, sycophants, and hangers-on. Patrimonialism-the right of the conquistadorprecludes competent administration or economic planning: it is based on obedience and whim, not law. This state of things requires a standing patrimonial army-thugs, mercenaries, death squads, responsible to no law save that of the caprice of the ruling clan.

This patrimonialist confusion of public and private functions and appropriations has been

the style of governance in Latin America al most constantly, from the Indian empires to the Spanish colonies to the Republican nations. We in Latin America understand this. We know intimately that if we do not abolish these conditions ourselves, we shall never be viable societies and harmonious communities. minimally prosperous, sufficiently independent

Many men and women have tried to change this barbaric order through reform: Juárez in Mexico, Sarmiento in Argentina, Battle in Uruguay, Arévalo in Guatemala, Allende in Chile. Others have had to use arms: Morelos and Morazán. Juárez when conservative militarism allied itself with French intervention to oppose the reform laws, Zapata, Sandino, and Guevara. The United States, too, knows this conflict between reform and revolution. Jackson and the two Roosevelts and Kennedy were able to reform; Washington and Lincoln had to fight, and their fights were cruel, bloody. and necessary. But they never had to reform or revolutionize such a persistent, ancient, slow-moving creature as this turtle of Latin American patrimonialism, protected by its standing army.

Today there are deep inequalities and staggering poverty in many other nations of Latin America, Africa, and Asia; but there is not always an accompanying revolutionary situation. Sometimes, as in Mexico or India, nationalist revolutions have created political institutions that cushion class warfare, permit policies of mediation and even of postponement, and are at times capable of effectively and flexibly reforming themselves. In Algeria and Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Nigeria, institutions are being fashioned out of the anticolonial experience, and many of the problems of those new nations will surely find political solutions.

The colonial-military complex

N EL SALVADOR political development was brutally interrupted in 1932, when the army, under the command of General Maximiliano Hernández Martínez, surrounded and massacred 30,000 people in order to crush a rebellion of peasants and proletarians who were simply asking for a minimum wage. Political freedom in El Salvador has been smothered ever since, from coup to rigged election to countercoup and through a constant unresponsiveness to the needs of the people. Who cared? Who knew anything about this nation, the smallest, the most densely inhabited, and one of the poorest nations in our hemisphere?

I shall tell you who knew. Father Rutilio Grande knew, who was killed because he said hat poverty is not the will of God but the greed of a few. Archbishop Oscar Romero enew, who was killed because he found it ntolerable that illiteracy in El Salvador afected nearly half of the population. Four American missionaries knew, who went to work and help so that the level of infant mortality n El Salvador should not be three or four imes higher than that of any other Western nation, President José Napoleón Duarte should cnow, he who was tortured by the same thugs with whom he shares power today, who was deprived of his electoral victory in 1972 by he same gorillas with whom today he offers ree elections to a population that has seen its prothers and sisters and fathers and mothers and children die, assassinated by the same leath squads that are supposed to guarantee ree elections in El Salvador.

ES, THOSE WHO knew have been silenced. The political opposition has been decimated. Yet a revolution of complex composition—Catholic, agrarian, and nationalist in its roots, but also with strong Marxist, democratic Christian, and social-democratic elements, with militant stu-

dents and accountants, printers and bank clerks—has claimed the right to do for El Salvador what has not been achieved in nearly five centuries: the abolition of colonialism, and at the very least the creation of a few conditions that might permit some evolution of the political structure.

"Who cared?
Who knew anything about this nation, smallest, the most densel

They have met the army. I suppose they have found out what every Latin American democratic movement has had to find out for itself: that as long as the army protects the fortress of colonialism, conditions will continue as they traditionally always have. Perhaps the problem for El Salvador is not the overthrow of this or that junta, but the overthrow of the army. For the army is the only obstacle standing between the congealed colonialism that feeds its own vicious circle and any form of evolutionary democracy. In order to exist, colonialism needs an army to protect it by repression: in order to exist, the army needs a colonial structure, which it must defend and preserve through repression.

The problem is there. It has been there for nearly five centuries. But it has been forgotten. It is conveniently forgotten every time Latin America makes a move toward independence.

When the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Jeane Kirkpatrick, says that violence in El Salvador is created by outside intervenWho cared?
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DOCTRINE

tion, not by social injustice, which has "existed for decades," she forgets that violence has also existed for decades; that it has, in fact, co-existed with social injustice for centuries. And when Secretary of State Alexander Haig says that "we are not going to be dragged into another Vietnam, but the problems will be dealt with at the source of the difficulty," it is to be hoped that he understands that the "source of difficulty" in El Salvador is military and paramilitary repression, the prevention of political evolution by the army.

Perhaps Mr. Haig and Ms. Kirkpatrick, if they are real anticommunists, will come to understand that by helping the military in El Salvador they help communism in El Salvador: that by identifying the Soviet Union with the revolution in El Salvador they hand the Soviet Union a moral victory that belongs only to the Salvadoran people. And that even if Cuba and the Soviet Union did not exist, there would still be a revolution in El Salvador. And that if it were true that arms are flowing into El Salvador from Hanoi and Havana and Managua, and should they then cease to flow, the civil war would continue in El Salvador, because it depends on historical factors that have nothing to do with communism-and because most of the arms that flow in come from private sources of contraband in Florida, Texas, and California.

The State Department White Paper on communist intervention in El Salvador prove nothing. The same arms have been photo graphed over and over, for Indochinese and Cuban and now Salvadoran effect; the captions and the photographs do not coincide an example of what, ludicrously, does coincide is the sinister "meeting" between Salvadorar communists and Sandinistas in Managua on a particular date, which happens to be the date of the anniversary of the Nicaraguan Revolution. So that Ambassadors McHenry and Pezullo, who were also present, stand accused as well

What can be proved is that if the Salva doran rebels had half the arms that the State Department credits them with, they would by now have swept the army barracks and captured the abundant U.S. matériel shipped into El Salvador; that the army commanders themselves smirk at the allegations of the State Department, because they know the rebels have mostly old rifles and bazookas and whatever they can get on the international black market. But they will not say so publicly; they need arms to control El Salvador and repress, again and again, any attempt at even minimal change. For how long would the present agrarian reforms outlive the triumph of the army



and the death squads in El Salvador? Two sets of figures tell the tale: 240 members of the new agrarian cooperatives have now been murdered by the paramilitary forces; eighty 20-ops are paying "protection" to the army. Protection from what? From the death squads trained, armed, and financed by the army itself, of course,

### The way out of El Salvador

HE WAY OUT of this mess is by not identifying military success in El Salvador with the prestige of the United States. For whether the United States oses or wins militarily in El Salvador, it will always lose in the end. It loses because if it hinks it has won it will have done so at the expense of the social and economic self-determination of the Salvadoran people. It will only have strengthened the prevailing official orutality and postponed the next insurrection. But it also loses if it thinks it has lost militarily, because it will then have passed up the opportunity to help El Salvador in the only way it can be helped by the United States. This way is for the United States to swallow hard and choose to become simply one among many participating forces in the solving of El Salvador's economic and social problems, according to El Salvador's needs.

For 1981 is not 1954; it is not even 1961. The opposition in El Salvador knows, as the revolutionaries in Nicaragua have learned, that once in power it can and should choose a plurality of sources of support-financial, technological, political. The choice for Nicaragua and El Salvador, the choice for all the underdeveloped nations, is not between the United States and the Soviet Union. It is between cold-war submission to one of the superpowers and the new, freer polity taking shape in spite

of Moscow and Washington.

The balance of forces in 1981 is not what it was in 1954 or in 1961. The U.S. should take a good hard look at the Central American and Caribbean area; link the realities there to those of the emerging nations in Asia and Africa, especially after the election of François Mitterrand in France; understand western Europe's desirable role as an enlightened broker in the relations between the developing and the industrialized worlds; glance at the severe tensions within the Soviet bloc; and conclude, with true courage, with true selfinterest, that nobody's welfare can be furthered by inventing a fictitious fulcrum of East-West confrontation in a small country where, even if it should "go communist," the

Soviet Union would be unable to maintain it "For whether within its orbit without paying an exorbitant material price, I suspect, however, that the Soviet Union does not want El Salvador in its orbit. The Soviet Union prefers to wink at the United States and say: "We have understood you. You can do whatever you like in your sphere of influence. We can do whatever we like in ours. We strangle Afghanistan. You strangle El Salvador, We strangle Poland, You strangle Nicaragua. And if it comes to the crunch and you want to strike at sources not outside the target area, here goes Cuba and here comes West Berlin, Okay?"

No, it is not okay; the balance has changed because Mexico and Venezuela have emerged as important economic and political powers in the Americas. They have a role to play in Central America and the Caribbean. They are playing that role, and their message is, Hands off El Salvador, everyone. Negotiate. Do not internationalize an internal conflict. Do not invent an East-West confrontation in a land that only requires North-South cooperation. The United States has a role to play, too, but only if it is in concert with the other nations of the area. What no one will tolerate is a proconsular attitude from Washington.

What we expect of the United States is loval participation in our own Latin American policy of shifting power from the army to the people; of ending the long rule of the army; of cooperating with Mexico and Venezuela and Costa Rica and West Germany and the Soviet Union and East Germany and Sweden and Japan and Canada and France in offering the people of El Salvador and Nicaragua the plural sources of aid they need to reconstruct their shattered economies.

What we expect of the United States is a shift in its attention away from the sterility of East-West confrontation and toward the fertil-

ity of global economic negotiations.

What we expect from the United States is as little and as much as Roosevelt gave Cárdenas: American faith and trust in itself as a democratic polity, and an understanding that by respecting self-determination in Latin America, by understanding change, upheaval, and even violence in Latin America instead of stopping change, adding to violence, and creating its own counterrevolutionary havoc, by accepting the universal right to revolution even when it hurts U.S. private interests, the United States is most loval to itself as a community founded on revolution, and most consonant with its self-interest when it does not permit marginal and private interests to set themselves above the meaning, the attraction, the truth of this great nation.

the United States loses or wins militarily in El Salvador. it will always lose in the end."

HARPER'S AUGUST 1981

Some say the answer is oil exploration. Some say the answer is conservation. For once, everybody is right.

It is exploration. It is conservation. It

is alternate energy sources. And it's more. Atlantic Richfield and thousands

of Americans who have invested with us believe that our economic growth doesn't have to be linked with heavy energy use Or with waste

formed a separate company to manage our broadened exploration program

Our new ARCO Exploration Company knows it will cost billions to find oil But it's an investment our country can make because the money is available.

Still, the most forceful domestic program won't be enough to meet the coming demand.

Nobody uses as much oil as America, Oil provides half of our energy needs. And half of that goes into transportation.

Smaller cars help. So do mileage standards.

And we're getting there. But we still have a long way to go. Right now, there's no economical substitute for oil as a transportation fuel. So, we will continue to use it. But coal, nuclear and solar are just as good for other energy needs. And they are much more plentiful. Energy is the issue of our time. The investment we make now will decide our future. At least Atlantic Richfield thinks so.

Without question, we must find more oil. And we must learn to use the

oil we have efficiently. So where do we start?

Scientists say there are billions of barrels of oil still undiscovered in the United States. We have the technology to find it.

Atlantic Richfield takes the prospect of domestic exploration seriously. And we've

There are no easy answers.



## PANIC AMONG THE PHILISTINES

The collapse of the literary establishment

by Bryan F. Griffin

T WAS THE chilly autumn of 1980, and what was left of the American cultural community had fallen on hard times. Old facades were suddenly crumbling, older nasks were finally rotting, and everywhere here was the unspoken fear that the game night soon be up. A few grim-faced defenders of the status quo were arming themselves with aded copies of Rolling Stone and swearing hat the enemy would get his big ugly attitude slapped before it was all over, but even these prave hearts lacked conviction, probably beause nobody could figure out just who the enemy was, exactly, let alone what he looked ike or where he was coming from. One anxious critic from Time magazine blamed all the trouble on a small but vicious band of literary 'purists," but the Washington Post nursed larker visions: "Post-romantic inverse snobbery attached to sales figures," muttered one of the Post's book reviewers, and we all shuddered, as we always do when the sales figures are in danger.

And indeed, most of the community elders were doing their damnedest to apprehend the threat as they had previously comprehended art, in terms of economic and political trends: "A period of conservatism appears to lie ahead in the arts," warned a former director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, just back from the front. His name was Thomas Hoving, and he had been to the board rooms of America's

artistic institutions to look for some "new blood," as he called it, but had stumbled into an enemy ambush instead: "Wealthy, oldmoney, upper-class people with frozen-in-amber attitudes," gasped the white-faced survivor trying to forget the horrible sight but knowing it would be with him for the rest of his days.

He didn't have to say another word: it was common knowledge within the community that educated people with spare cash shouldn't be permitted to have anything to do with art in a democracy, and for years everybody had been planning for the day when teams of poverty-stricken adolescents with determinedly liquid values would be rounded up and forced to administer the nation's cultural institutions. And now suddenly the future was threatening: "You tend to get certain conservative attitudes when you have hard times," said Mr. Hoving darkly, peering through his cultural field glasses at the bloody hills above; which was absolute nonsense, historically, but it made some of the chaps in the bunker feel a little better, because it sounded like behaviorism, instead of art.

Mr. Hoving was and is a sharp and decent man, but also something of an artistic and intellectual neutralist; the really important thing, in his eyes, was to avert a panic. "A lot of people argue that the arts are in crisis," he laughed, trying to sound calm. "I wouldn't agree. Artists and people involved in the administration of the arts are always screaming

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This is the first part of a two-part article.

Bryan Griffin
PANIC
AMONG THE
PHILISTINES

about crises." It might have been the voice of appeasement, but it drew some halfhearted applause from an almost forgotten corner of the nation's faculty lounge, where a fifty-year-old professor of creative writing named John Barth was still trying to persuade himself and The New York Times Book Review that everything was going to be all right.

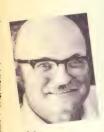
IKE ALL fifty-year-old professors of creative writing. Mr. Barth was the author of a stack of very long and very precious "innovative" novels, and so naturally he was an old hand when it came to cultural trend-spotting. He was able to say without fear of contradiction that the troubles of 1980 were only temporary, a brief "trend of the decade," and he had it on very good authority that the troops would be home by Christmas: after all, "a culture's trends are not necessarily its monuments," explained the professor, inadvertently leveling most of the artistic reputations on campus, including one very close to his own innovative heart. Closing his eyes to the carnage, Mr. Barth hurried on to apply an eccentric twist to the Hoving thesis: there was indeed a "general conservative reaction," he said, but it was actually a reaction to an exotic academic activity known as "convention busting," which had been Mr. Barth's particular specialty, in palmier days, And now that he came to think of it, it was rather lonely on campus, all of a sudden; not at all like the dear dead days of the glorious 1960s, when "perhaps half" of the kids in the professor's graduate-level seminars in Convention Busting had been feverishly "involved in formally innovative writing of one sort or another." Why, in 1980, "virtually no one was." It must have something to do with the economy, the professor was sure of it; it was all connected in some way with "literary Howard Jarvises," it was a "Proposition 13 mentality" directed against something called "post-modernism," it was . . . it was . . . oh my God it was "Reagan Country"!

The full force of Mr. Barth's socio-economic revelations hit home with a terrifying mental thud. There were shadowy economic moralists abroad in the national quad, and they were "in the ascendancy," and they had made all the formally innovative graduate students grow up and go away, and now the moralists were "preaching the family novel" at Mr. Barth, and pretty soon there was going to be a chilling "return to traditional literary values"! Oh it was awful awful it was awful: "The decade of the Moral Majority," whispered the horrified professor, "will doubtless

be the decade of"-vou could have heard trend drop-"Moral Fiction" The ghast vision was complete, and the cries of endar gered influence filled the air. Nobody in the faculty lounge was quite sure what a Trad tional Literary Value was, of course, let alon how to write the filthy stuff, but the whole thing sounded absolutely sickmaking. Poc Mr. Barth tried to restore some order to th scene by singing an old 1960s convention busting lullaby called "Reagan Country is no the whole of Western civilization," but h could hardly hear himself croon; his bizarr literary meditations had aroused far too man defenseless imaginations, and the Americal cultural campus was in an unholy uproar.

As so often before, some of the most wrench ing noises seemed to be coming from another fifty-year-old professor of creative writing named Edgar Doctorow, Mr. Doctorow, a pop ular writer of rather smutty political novels was explaining to Victor Navasky of the Nation that the increasing legions who were making fun of his scatological tracts were actually "making political judgments in the guise of esthetic objectivity." For obvious reasons, he didn't think that people should be allowed to discuss his literary merchandise in terms of its intellectual or philosophical content: why, "they want to set up a Commissar in the Republic of Letters," howled Mr. Doctorow, as he began to discern the shape of reviews to come.

UT IF CULTURAL reactionaries like the Doctorows and the Barths were almost embarrassingly eager to define the threat in political terms, more sophisticated victims were proposing more sophisticated enemies. The fiercely modern theatrical producer Joseph Papp, for example, had noticed a lot of old plays around town lately, and he was getting nervous; it was "sentimentality," that's what it was, sentimentality, and sentimentality was "decadent." "People want the good old days back," complained the sixty-year-old showman, sounding just a bit bewildered by the sudden turn of events. He himself would never be associated with a "revival," of course, because all revivals were "out-of-date" and Mr. Papp was Never Ever Out-of-Date, please God: "I wouldn't do it," he declared wistfully. The up-to-date producer stood around looking unsentimental for a while, and then he wandered off to produce a revival of The Pirates of Penzance, apparently under the impression that Gilbert and Sullivan were a couple of young sax players. from Nutley. "Who am I to be a wet blanket



Like all fifty-yearold professors of creative writing, John Barth was the author of a stack of very long and very precious 'innovative' novels, and so naturally he was an old hand when it came to cultural trendspotting.

about anything that brings people to the theater?" he muttered somewhat sheepishly, trying to keep at least one toe in every camp,

and succeeding.

But even as Mr. Papp was endeavoring to get a fix on the most elusive trend he'd ever seen. Truman Capote was drifting through the corridors of art saying that it was No use, no use: the enemy wasn't "sentimentality" at all, the enemy was Jealousy. The stout-hearted little trooper was still trying to smile bravely, but he was pretty sure he'd heard a sudden explosion of "envy" during the night: "People simply cannot endure success," explained Mr. Capote, and so naturally the people-those notorious literary purists-were bent on "destroying" Mr. Capote and all his good works. Before long the condemned man was joined on the block by the literary sexologist Gay Talese, who was telling the Washington Post and anyone else he could find that his latest book had made certain literary critics "unhappy" and "vengeful," and inspired in them an unholy "desire to destroy." And it wasn't your run-of-the-mill vengefulness, either: "[It's] a desire to destroy me," boasted Mr. Talese, elbowing Mr. Capote's feeble martyrdom aside.

By this time the hysteria had spread across all social and disciplinary boundaries, and nobody was too terribly surprised when Pauline Kael of The New Yorker suddenly scrambled out of her cinematic foxhole and took out after the new generation of moviegoers. Ms. Kael was mad as hell because some of the new kids were beginning to stay away in droves from the films that Ms. Kael was telling them to go see, the really fun films that would "tie up their guts" and "give them nightmares." Ms. Kael never allowed herself to be seen in public with untied guts; indeed, she'd always thought that the really kicky thing about the talkies was that they gave one a chance to "experience a sense of danger," right there in the middle of a great big city, and if the new sissies thought there was something a little weird about that, if they thought they were being "more discriminating" by running away from the yummy "sight of blood," well, Ms. Kael was there to tell them that she wasn't about to give up quietly. Kids these days had too much 'good taste," that's what it was: "Delicacy is once again becoming a mark of culture and breeding," cried the sixty-year-old daredevil, spreading the warning to every Westchester village and town. It wasn't long before Ms. Kael's bizarre theories of violence began to get all wound up with her thoughts about Lust In The Back Row, and the results were just a tad embarrassing: "Squeamishnesssurely with terror and prurient churnings under it?—is the basis of this good taste," she sneered, just daring anyone to accuse her of prurient squeamishness. Nobody knew quite what she had in mind, but the ragged troops gave her one last weary cheer for having aligned herself foursquare against Delicacy, Discrimination, Breeding, and Good Taste, the Four Horsemen of the Cultural Apocalypse.

In the end, though, the age-old complaint of the hunted Philistine sounded most pitiably from the lips of schlock novelist John ("Garp") Irving, who was peering nervously under all the literary beds and explaining to anybody who would listen that "the elitists" and "the snobs" were out to get him. "[They] sneer," wailed Mr. Irving, and the frightening implication was that two horrible street gangs from the nineteenth century were going to tie Mr. Irving up and make faces at him until. God forbid, his own sales figures started plummeting. Oh, it was a scary time to be alive! Everybody was pointing the trembling finger at everybody else, but nobody knew just what to do, or where to hide: the impertinent winds of change were howling again, and there was stark terror down amid the Manhattans and the vodka sours.

### Eccentric mediocrity

HE COLLAPSE had come with astonishing speed, or so it seemed to the victims. Less than a decade earlier, at the start of the 1970s, the political novelist William Styron had been able to say with a straight face that his generation of intellectuals was putting up "a pretty good show," culturally speaking. He was especially proud of the professional creative writers of his time. "Whether or not we shall receive posterity's sweet kiss," he said coyly, "it has been a rich time for writing, I think, richer than may be imagined." He told Esquire magazine that he was thinking of guys like "Mailer, Baldwin, Jones, Capote, Salinger." Also "Gore Vidal, John Barth, Terry Southern, Heller, Walker Percy, Peter Matthiessen." Not to mention "William Gaddis, Richard Yates, Evan Connell, George Mandel, Herbert Gold, Jack Kerouac, Vance Bourjaily, John Clellon Holmes, Calder Willingham, Alan Harrington, John Phillips, William Gass, and, honorifically, George Plimpton." (Mr. Styron had a way of mixing a very little bit of wheat with his chaff, but it was unintentional.) "No gathering," gulped the novelist modestly, "ever comprised a clutch of talents so remarkably various."

As if that weren't enough to stop the



Edgar Doctorow, a popular writer of rather smutty political novels, was explaining . . . that the increasing legions who were making fun of his scatological tracts were actually 'making political judgments in the guise of objectivity.'



The age-old complaint of the hunted Philistine sounded most pitiably from the lips of schlock novelist John ('Garp') Irving, who was peering nervously under all the literary beds and explaining to anybody who would listen that 'the elitists' and 'the snobs' were out to get him. Bryan Griffin
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conversation dead in its tracks, Mr. Styron went on to declare that "the poets of this generation" would also "sparkle brightly" after Posterity (the old hussy) had kissed them. "From Simpson to Merwin, James Dickey to Anthony Hecht, Snodgrass to Allen Ginsberg," they were all going to sparkle, yes, they were, every one of them. Mr. Styron agreed with John Hollander ("himself a fine poet") that the generation of sparklers stood as "some sort of testament" to the "struggle to redeem poetry" from the "sickness with which Literature as a realm is too often infected" (that's the way those guys wrote, in the dizzy years).

As for Mr. Styron himself, well, watch out, world, he'd "never felt so young," As a matter of fact, he would not have been at all astonished if "our truly most precious flowering lay in the time to come." The Most Precious Blossom took a deep breath: "Revolution rends the air," he shrieked; "the world around us shivers with the brave racket of men seeking their destiny, with the invigorating noise of history in collision with itself." None of it seemed too terribly relevant, coming from a man who was at that moment working on a play called "In the Clap Shack," but it had an extraordinarily good beat. "This generation, once so laggardly, now confronts a scene astir with great events, such a wild dynamo of dementedly marvelous transactions that merely to be able to live through them should be cause for jubilation," roared the excited novelist, almost toppling out of his ivory tower. "Mes amis," he howled, "aux barricades!"

And then suddenly, less than ten years later. it was all over. Many of the names that had once seemed so glorious to Mr. Styron had been easily forgotten, and most of those that were still remembered had become synonyms for a particularly quaint strain of eccentric mediocrity. Dr. Styron's Wild Dynamo of Demented Transactions was fast becoming a cultural memory, and a rather vawn-making one at that. When Norman Mailer tried to recapture the Spirit of Styron in 1980, he found himself delivering a eulogy instead. "Our prediction is safe," chanted Mr. Mailer, shutting his eyes tight and wishing on a star, "We will break out of our cyst, infiltrate other disciplines, inhabit new epistemological modes. We will exfoliate." There was an awkward pause, and the little cyst-breaker opened one cultural eye. "Excelsior!" he muttered. "I mean, Excalibur!" It was a sign of the times that nobody bothered to correct him, simply because it didn't seem to matter anymore; an era was dying with bewildering speed, and not all the righteous incantations in the English-speaking world could restore the patient to health.



At the start of the 1970s, the political novelist William Styron had been able to say with a straight face that his generation of intellectuals was putting up 'a pretty good show, culturally speaking.

ND YEA, terror bred confusion, and confusion quickly became panic. Some of the boys and girls who hadn't made it to the lifeboats in time were beginning to run around in circles, trying hard to look like purists and intellectual elitists, but nobody could remember what it was like, exactly, to be a purist, and in the general chaos some of the slower kids were left standing around without many clothes on at all.

Cult novelist Jerzy Kosinski, for instance, was in an awful state because he seemed to have lost the knack of offending his readers. "My characters insult them, mock their values," insisted Mr. Koşinski. It was a suitably embarrassing psychological revelation, but it didn't go very far toward easing the novelists growing difficulties. "Just to keep up with inflation, my readers should increase by 30 percent a year," said the anxious mocker of

values, "but they don't."

Even so, Mr. Kosinski's public discomfort didn't begin' to rival that of cultural historian Max Lerner. Mr. Lerner was the author of all sorts of big disapproving volumes with titles like America as a Civilization, and he'd been dispensing moral and literary judgments from the columns of the Civilization's newspapers for more than fifty years—all in all, a most unlikely candidate for public discomfort. But in 1980 he surfaced rather abruptly in the soiled pages of Gay Talese's exhausting survey of sex in fringe America, and to everybody's horror he surfaced smack in the middle of a Californian "sex community."

"On some evenings," recalled Mr. Talese in his inimitable fashion, "there were gathered around the fireplace, conversing, in various stages of dress and sometimes nude, such individuals as," well, such individuals as the guy who wrote The Joy of Sex, and the curator of a "museum of erotic art," and a feminist artist who produced "heroic paintings of sexual passion," and ... and "the New York Post's syndicated columnist Max Lerner." Max Lerner! Bill Movers of the Public Broadcasting Service whirled into action and hurriedly scheduled a two-part television interview with Mr. Lerner so that the grand old theorist could let loose with a few spare moral judgments, but somehow it just wasn't the same anymore. It was, as a matter of fact, more than a little sad: because even though Mr. Lerner was all dressed up in his toughest old workshirt, he looked...he looked as though he weren't wearing anything at all! The English novelist Malcolm Bradbury once said that Mr. Lerner was "less concerned for literature as such than for its expressive function in revealing the culture"; in 1980, many observers were sudlenly less concerned for Max Lerner's literiture as such than for Max Lerner's expressive unction in revealing his own culture.

Not that Mr. Lerner was alone in assuming new cultural responsibilities during the time of transition. There was the very dignified ohn Cheever, for instance, who had once been one of America's major novelists," in the patented phrase of the Book-of-the-Month Club the organization in charge of mid-level literary titles). Why, it seemed like only the other lay that we'd been falling all over one another n the rush to celebrate Mr. Cheever's extended analysis of American masturbatory habits n his novel Falconer, and now all of a sudden here he was, hawking a line of men's watches n the pages of The New Yorker. And how wkwardly the mighty had fallen: called up on he mat to explain his unliterary activities, Mr. Theever tried to sweeten his new image by announcing that he'd never actually owned one of the watches before making his decision to appear in the advertisements. But the former Major Novelist couldn't trust himself to talk about it anymore: "I don't believe people should have to explain everything they do,' ruffed the apprentice adman, scrambling to zet back into his metaphorical Artist's tweeds before the spotlight went away.

The tweedy part of Mr. Cheever tried to nake amends by knocking out a "What I Believe About Art" sort of essay for Parade nagazine (which was in itself a remarkable concession to tweed, since Cheever Art usually appeared in Playboy), and the message was one of desperate hope: "Cretins do indeed write books for one another, but they do not rule the scene," insisted Mr. Cheever, standing up for the community's (and incidentally John Cheever's) sales charts. It was a wellintentioned defense, but somehow the tone was all wrong, especially in the suspension-of-disbelief department. "Literature is produced by a genuinely dedicated group of professionals who hope to be paid enough to educate their children and keep warm in the winter," whispered the plaintive artist, huddling closer to the dving literary embers. He managed to utter the obligatory words about "our shared knowledge of the power of love and the forces of memory," but even he seemed to realize that it was far too late for another costume change. Most ominous of all was the fact that nobody had said a word about Falconer, or even asked Mr. Cheever if he had anything new to say about sexual self-gratification. The damned purists. "I shan't talk about it, I think," muttered Mr. Cheever. He was referring to a line of men's wristwatches, but nobody was listening anymore.

Even those members of The New Yorker's staff who shared Mr. Cheever's particular literary interests were suddenly very busy with their own sad thoughts. Gay Talese's good friend Michael Arlen, for instance, was dashing about the countryside trying to persuade stray journalists that the act of watching television was very, "very close to masturbation." Mr. Arlen's revelation had come upon him when he'd noticed-at the inevitable age of fifty-that television watching was "something somebody does in a room by oneself in a kind of a daze in a kind of a space of one's own," or something kind of like that sort of in a kind of a way. (Ah, that dear old New Yorker style!) Mr. Arlen's own philosophizing was apparently something that he did in a room by himself in a kind of a daze in a kind of a space of his own. He was just positive that his fellow citizens had a "deep connection" to the "unusual passivity" of the "process" of television watching, and golly, it was all "rather sexual," though for reasons Mr. Arlen could not comprehend, his fellow citizens would "rather not get into that." Mr. Arlen wished that everybody would get into that, because Mr. Arlen's lonely studies had convinced him that the real reason that parents didn't like their children to watch too much television by themselves was-well, the poor chap began to get Rather Sexual at that point, and we would Rather Not Get Into That.

VEN SO, the cultural authorities at The New Yorker had plenty of intellectual tistic establishment was into Mr. Arcompany: in those days, the entire arlen's euphemistic That, "That" was the spirit that the artist Vito Acconci was pandering to when he offered to fondle himself to the point of sexual ecstasy in the presence of visitors to a Soho art gallery (a modest man, Mr. Acconci proposed to be hidden from view during the actual creative process). And "That" was what Gore Vidal was talking about when he said that the critic Edmund Wilson's erotic memoirs were inferior to some of Mr. Vidal's favorite Victorian pornography, because "we" didn't know what the Victorians looked like, and such ignorance was "an important aid to masturbation." "I am not sure just why Wilson felt that he should write so much about cock and cunt," said Mr. Vidal, with puzzled air and characteristic vocabulary: poor Mr. Wilson had not known what Mr. Vidal knew so well, that erotic memoirs were "engaging"—as an "aid to masturbation," presumably only when the memorialists were, of course, "interested in getting laid as often as possible



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| | Gay Talese . was telling the Washington Post and anyone else he could find that his latest book had made certain literary critics 'unhappy' and 'vengeful...' 'It's a desire to destroy me, boasted Mr. Talese.

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in as many different ways and combinations."

It was not particularly interesting (or surprising) that the fifty-five-year-old Vidal should have allowed himself to ramble on in the manner of Cheever and Arlen (after all, he had just announced that his next book would be published by Lyle Stuart, whose current best seller was the autobiography of the pornographic movie star Linda Lovelace); but it was interesting, and indicative, that the editors of the New York Review of Books should have seen fit to print and distribute those ramblings. The editors of the Review suspected a nasty truth that more serious editors would have found hard to credit: that there was a specialized and literate audience for the onanistic view of human existence and culture, and that this audience was to be found amid the ruins of the shattered cultural hierarchy-among the readers of the New York Review of Books. It was an audience left over from the days of Warhol and Morrissey and Hockney and Roth (remember Roth?), an old audience gone gray and gone public.

John Leonard of *The New York Times* summed up the intellectual context of the moment when he brought his increasingly common sensibility to bear on a perfectly rational book about Oriental thought. Mr. Leonard wasn't much interested in the book, of course, but he was oddly fascinated by certain thought ful Westerners of his own imagination, who "stayed home to hallucinate." Sex was "the coin of this imaginative realm," according to Mr. Leonard, "a displacement of political power, of scavenging. While we generalized about race, mind, culture, and nation, we mastur-

bated."

Truman Capote did find time to publish a new batch of "nonfiction short stories" just before the "envy" set in, but it was not a happy occasion. "I'm an alcoholic. I'm a drug addict. I'm homosexual. I'm a genius," wrote Mr. Capote hopefully, only to be met by an awkward critical silence. Predictably, the new stories were notable chiefly for the insights they afforded into the fifty-five-year-old Wanderer's own philosophy of habitual self-abuse: "Whatever would we do without Mother Fist and her Five Daughters? They've certainly been a friendly bunch to us through the years, etc. All in all, it was a pretty flat Publishing Event, and only the most venerable among us could even remember a time when Truman Capote had been, in the words of Random House, "one of the master stylists of our time," and "a master of English prose," a time when Norman Mailer had been able to refer to the Master Stylist as "the most perfect writer of my generation."

And where was Norman Mailer, in this tim of crisis? Well, "the most important literar figure of his generation" (Grove Press) was touring the television talk shows, trying to "vend" his latest "creation," and wondering what had happened to all his youthful dreams "It's a poor way for a grown man to live." sighed the former literary figure: "perched or a stage full of pale orange and pale blue plas tic furniture, hot lights up, your stomach rum bling." And when Mr. Mailer wasn't vending and rumbling in front of the cameras he was writing long books about old movie stars and selling pieces of those books to the women's magazines. At one point the Important Vender even called in a reporter from one of those magazines in order to announce that he was believe it or not, "the 'ghost' of Marilyr Monroe." Sure enough, the ghost was trying to Vend its latest Creation: "I expect people to jump on this book and say 'How dare he!' cried Mr. Mailer, somewhat wistfully. If there are any ghost-watchers out there who are still interested in jumping on Mr. Mailer, they should please give him a call. He is waiting and it would be a kindness.

### Cleverness for its own sake

O DRAW ATTENTION to these individual cultural embarrassments-to these exposures, if you will-is also to describe the fundamental deficiency (and the fatal weakness) of an entire class of self-proclaimed artists and thinkers. The quivering guardians of the old order were pleasant clever people, on the whole, but they were not especially interesting or cultivated people, and they were certainly not serious people: most of them had fallen into what they thought of as the life of the mind much as they might once have fallen into a life of ballroom dancing, or real-estate speculation. Just as the younger sons of the colonial centuries had joined the cavalry or the church simply because one had to join something, so had many of the children of the first age of mass public education drifted into the service of popular "art" and "education" and cultural arbitration simply because they had nowhere else to go; they were artistic and philosophical xenophobes without intellectual definition or social purpose, even in their own minds-fuzzy minds devoid of soul, pretentious craftsmen devoid of discipline, the ubiquitous Babbitts of the second half of the twentieth century.

As a class, they were the people that Arnold of Rugby had seen coming when he cautioned Arthur Stanley against the cultivation of clev-



It seemed like only the other day that we'd been falling all over one another in the rush to celebrate Mr. Cheever's extended analysis of American masturbatory habits in his novel Falconer, and now all of a sudden here he was, hawking a line of men's watches in . . . The New Yorker.

erness for its own sake: "Mere intellectual cuteness," said the Doctor, "divested as it is. n too many cases, of all that is comprehensive and great and good, is to me more revolting han the most helpless imbecility, seeming to be almost like the spirit of Mephistopheles. Not surprisingly, the disciplined Doctor was a villainous authoritarian in Lytton Strachev's icalous eyes, and he would have seemed an alien monster to Strachey's intellectual descendants, had they been conversant with either Strachey or Arnold. The progeny of resentnent had embraced their cultural isolation (and its attendant ignorance) as a matter of artistic principle; and because they knew so little of the purposes or the history of life. they knew even less of art. Inevitably, they had tried to divorce the art from the life -to make a closed shop of the human psychology and spirit-and in doing so they had signed their own cultural death warrants, the warrants that were finally being read aloud in the late 1970s and early 1980s. "Any teaching ... which attempts to separate the poet from the man as though his excellence were to be measured by a radically different set of tests is, to my mind, either erroneous or trifling and superficial," said Leslie Stephen in his essay on Carlyle's ethics: this was "the fundamental doctrine of all sound criticism, whether of art or literature or life." But if the cultural exiles knew Sir Leslie at all, they knew him as the father of Virginia Woolf (and Virginia Woolf, they recalled, had been mentioned in a play by Edward Albee, which had been made into a movie, which everybody had gone to see because it had been directed by Mike Nichols, who was a monument); "fundamental doctrines" had no place in the neighborhoods of professional uncertainty and institutionalized triviality.

The cultural establishment had deliberately rendered itself "trifling and superficial" over a period of forty or fifty years, and by 1980 it had become a bloated irrelevance, a dead weight that the artistic conscience of the larger society was no longer willing to listen to or support. Like the younger sons in the outposts of empire in 1903, the cultural philistines of 1980 were suddenly in the way, an obstacle to artistic growth and intellectual advance, an embarrassment to the literary democracy that had spawned them, aging relics of a vanished order of civic immaturity. The philistines were never to know it, but their true enemies were progress, and civilization, and-most of alltime. With the legions of the past, the present, and the future arrayed against it, the postwar American cultural community looked, in a word, silly. Scared silly.

HERE WAS still plenty of brave talk, of course. Some of it surfaced when The New York Times Book Review distributed a little questionnaire around the community to find out if any of the residents still thought they were "really living, as one critic put it, in a Golden Age of the American Novel." Now, it goes without saying that people who are living in a Golden Age of anything do not spend their afternoons asking one another if they are really living in a Golden Age, but the stragglers of 1980 didn't know this, and the response to the questionnaire was almost touching in its fevered loyalty to the dead faith. Yes, yes, they were living in a Golden Age, said everybody tearfully, and it was going to get better and better, and it was going to be All Right.

Typical in the insistence of his response was a clever young writer of explicitly erotic novels named Scott Spencer, who strongly suspected that "the future" would deem the novelists of his time "as among the ablest America has known." Mr. Spencer left it up to "future literary journalists" to decide exactly how his novelists would compare with "the great American novelists of the past"-"how William Styron compares with Thomas Wolfe." for instance, and, even more oddly, "how Philip Roth compares with Nathaniel Hawthorne"-but his own mind was already made up: the literature in question was "prospering" mightily, and the Age was Golden, yes it was it was it was.

The novelist Joyce Carol Oates couldn't have agreed more. "It is likely that we live in the very best of times," she sighed vaguely, and it was as close as she'd ever come to making a flat statement about anything. Alas. Ms. Oates was a professor of creative writing (at Princeton), and so it wasn't very long before she found herself talking, as so often before, about "the imaginative freedom of the novelist in his or her craft," and about the "wild and surrealist employment" of "historical and nonfiction elements" in "the service of a metaphoric vision," and that kind of thing. The professor took a rather timid slap at the dread "nineteenth century, when brainless moralizing romances sold in the millions,' and then scurried back to the service of her metaphoric vision: "I anticipate lyricism and airiness, luxuriant space, the freedom to attempt virtually anything within the elastic confines of the 'novel,' "she hummed, sounding eerily like the William Styron of a happier age. "There is an exhilarating challenge in making prose outrageous and beautiful and idiosyncratic," said Ms. Oates, and her face wasn't even red.



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### Dime-a-dozen Dantes

HE Let's Pretend We're Living In A Golden Age game was not a new one. For decades the entire cultural establishment had been putting itself to sleep at night by telling itself over and over again that it was a truly stupendous little cultural establishment, probably the most important little cultural establishment that had ever existed. It had been an age of cut-rate Homers and dimea-dozen Dantes, of daily Cultural Events and weekly Artistic Epochs, an age bracketed by congratulatory self-delusion and defined by the proximity of its own horizons, an age when everything was Great precisely because nothing was very good. It had been the age of Capote and Warhol and Updike and Pollock masquerading as the age of Pericles, and even in its death throes it shamed itself and its parent countries with the shabbiness of its brayado. It was the shabbiness of a self-induced cultural deprivation, the bravado of an entrenched provincialism; the game of Golden Age had been played for so long that nobody knew it was a game anymore.

When the columnist Anthony Lewis said that a recent book about Ways of Lying was "exceptionally important," he didn't really mean that it was important: he meant that it was important within the context of the game, which was the only context that Anthony Lewis had ever known. He would have said the same for any stray work of the imagination, and

frequently did.

And so did everybody else, of course. It was a time when all things were important because nothing was. If Mr. Lewis could say that his book of the moment was "exceptionally" important, then there was nothing to stop his old colleague Harrison Salisbury from saving that a new book about animals was not only "important," but "myth-shattering" as well. If The New York Times Book Review could say that some new CIA memoirs were "important," if Professor Wolff of Brandeis could say that The Age of Structuralism was "an important contribution to contemporary intellectual . . . history," if Professor Riley of Wisconsin could say that a much better book (Justice and the Human Good) was "fine and important," then why shouldn't Gaddis Smith tell the readers of Foreign Affairs that The National Interest and the Human Interest was "a book of major importance"? For that matter, why shouldn't the critic Jonathan Yardley go a step further and pretend that a new collection of Ernest Hemingway's semiliterate letters was "a book of enormous importance"?

After all Peter Prescott of Newsweek had already said that the volume had deepened his understanding of "one of America's most important writers." Under the circumstances one had to feel a certain sympathy for the novelist and English professor John Gardner, who finally threw in his towel and decided that everything he'd ever read was "immensely important." William Styron's latest book was "immensely important," Three Farms (Making Milk. Meat and Money from the American Soil) was "immensely important," Even Joyce Carol Oates's novel of the week was "immensely important," Mr. Gardner didn't go so far as to admit that John Gardner himself was Immensely Important, but the implication was quite clear.

Y THE TIME 1980 rolled around, Joyce Carol Oates had written so many immensely important stories that they weren't even stories anymore: they were Fictions. When Peter Prescott of Newsweek said that "Oates's fictions" were "seductive" because they had a "sense of the irrational" in them, he wasn't just enjoying a typically silly morning, he was making a deliberate little bow to the Profundity God. and he wanted very much to be noticed in the act. A story, after all, was just a story, but a "fiction" fairly reeked of importance-ergo. people who were "seduced" by "fictions" were ever so much more important than book reviewers who just liked irrational stories.

By the same token, when William Golding wrote a good novel (and it was a good novel), Doris Grumbach was afraid to say that "William Golding has written a good novel." She had to get down on her literary hands and knees and make her daily obeisance to the fat little idol of professional criticism: "You may be quite sure that English novelist William Golding will be remembered in the history of literature as an inventive and original maker of fictions." In less important centuries, this would have been known as "using twentysix words to do the work of seven," but in the twentieth century it was called "style." Ms. Grumbach had "much admired" Mr. Golding's previous book "for its portraits of modern monsters, a physically maimed boy born in the fires of the London blitz and other young moral freaks," but she was even more ecstatic about the new Fiction, because it had left her "with a sense of the mystery of existence integral to its formlessness," by which she meant to say that it was a really high-class type of book but she'd run out of space so could she stop now please.



There was a specialized and literate audience for the onanistic view of human existence and culture. . . . It was an audience left over from the days of Warhol and Morrissev and Hockney and Roth (remember Roth?), an old audience gone gray and gone public.

Ms. Grumbach couldn't stop for long. hough, because the third-class passengers were gaining on her: when Robert Coover's lirty stories had first appeared in magazines ike Cavalier and Playboy and Olympia, they were just dirty stories, but by the time E. P. Dutton had shoved them between reasonably pard covers they had become "fictions" that 'challenge the assumptions of our age," which was E. P. Dutton talk for God This Is Hot Stuff We Promise, Why, hell, Mr. Coover's fictions used "the fabulous to probe beyond randomly perceived events," they were "weapons that counterpoint our consciousness, that show us the need for new modes of perception." Which must have been what lovce Carol Oates was trying to say when she said (in the Southern Review, of all places) that Mr. Coover existed "blatantly and brilliantly in his fiction as an authorial consciousness." Or perhaps not. In any case, the Coover fictions were "not human," they were "magic" (also hot stuff).

Ms. Oates had to say all those funny things because E. P. Dutton had ruled that Mr. Coover's fictions were "beyond randomly perceived events," and Ms. Oates knew that "bevond" was a code word for profundity, as in Beyond Anxiety, Beyond Biofeedback, Beyond Intellectual Sexism, etc. "Beyond" didn't mean anything, but it sounded ever so important, and accordingly it had become a bit of a last resort, in the dark days of 1980. Many of the kids had been Beyond Freedom and Dignity for years, of course, but now they were going Beyond Reason, Beyond Monogamy, Beyond Within, and-inevitably-Beyond Jogging. Some hell-raiser from Time magazine had even found some old Beatle recordings that "leaked suggestive bits of near-meaning that made beyond-sense." Now you know what that was all about.

UT THEN, Beyond-Art, like Beyond-Thought, was almost always "suggestive." It was not actually composed, or written, or painted, nor was it about anything or characterized by any quality; it was just Suggested, or Felt, or-most often-Informed. The novelist Jay Neugeboren was giving somewhat excessive voice to this principle when he told the readers of the Nation that he liked stories that were "seen clearly and sharply and that had a voice informing them which was steady, severe, spare"; stories in which "there was the sense of a particular life lived, one in which the history of that life, past and future, was suggested and felt beyond the beginning and end of the story."

Mr. Neugeboren would have gone ape over Harry Crews, who claimed that all of his stories were "of necessity still informed by my notions of the world and of what it is to be caught in it." Mr. Crews meant that he had trouble writing about things he didn't know about, but-"of necessity"-he didn't dare come right out in front of everybody and admit it. It was ever so much safer to be Informed. It was this spirit that prompted a professor named George Hunt to insist that John Updike's tales of cunnilingus were "informed" by "Nature," and it was this spirit that allowed Joyce Carol Oates to say of the same tales that they were "informed" by a delightfully "passionate and despairing cynicism.

In the same mood, Jack Kroll of Newsweek found himself applauding the director of a new production of Hamlet who hadn't "been afraid" to "lay hands on the sacred text": Of Necessity the deed had been done with "a passionate intelligence that informs the entire production." The director had informed the first scene of Hamlet by doing away with it. and he had informed the ghost of Hamlet's father by cutting the ghost of Hamlet's father out of the play. This was "a daring innovation." "Hamlet's dead father appears not as a specter but as a kind of Danish dybbuk muscling his way out of Hamlet's very bowels," explained Mr. Kroll. "Hamlet becomes a giant, unwilling ventriloquist's dummy as his father's voice is wrenched from his mouth in hairraising sepulchral tones while [Hamlet's] body lashes, heaves and snaps in a fit of ectoplasmic epilepsy." Now that was Informed Beyond-Art.

Mr. Kroll was in a pleasant tizzy about the new production (it was "a paranoid's paradise," full of "cosmic jitters and colliding antitheses"), but he was also just a bit nervous; the "purists" were out there, he said, and they might not share his ectoplasmic excitement; after all, the Paranoid's Paradise was fizzing with the "high voltage" of-you guessed it-"reality." Mr. Kroll was eager to squeeze his pet reality down the nation's throat before the purists made him look like a fool. "This most pertinently impertinent of modern 'Hamlets' should be seen in America," he roared, but somehow it sounded a bit weak, like the wheeze of a man who was swimming against the tide.

But if Mr. Kroll and his friends were already out of their depth in Shakespearean waters, plenty of other folks were still splashing about happily in shallower ponds, heedless of the approaching storm. The novelist Michael Mewshaw, for instance, couldn't stop Informing the works of Gore Vidal, even though he must have known that it was time for both



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It had been the age of Capote and Warhol and Updike and Pollock masquerading as the age of Pericles, and even in its death throes it shamed itself and its parent countries with the shabbiness of its bravado. Bryan Griffin
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of them to get inside. "Given the general view that Vidal is a man of questionable morals," said Mr. Mewshaw, "it is ironic that his most serious failing as a novelist is his determination to infuse his fiction with the same ethical concerns, the polemical intensity and the didactic spirit that inform his nonfiction." Which might well have been the case, but it didn't make the assemblage look any less wet.

NE OF THE soggiest of the literary refugees was the ubiquitous Doris Grumbach, who was trying to dry off her intellectual reputation with one of D. M. Thomas's Erotic Epics. "If this were not a review, and if the reader did not expect from it some descriptive analysis and summary. I would simply advise him to 'experience' the book," said Ms. Grumbach, in a somewhat snappish burst of candor. Ms. Grumbach was a former Artistic Information Officer who had transferred her lovalties to the new Department of Instruction: Mr. Thomas's Epic constituted an "affecting and influencing network that puzzles the reader, then intrigues him and finally instructs him in the complexities of the hidden life of the psyche, even if he has never read Freud."

Paul Grav of Time, on the other hand, was reminded by the same book that "fiction can amaze as well as inform." "It promises sex, violence, a woman stripped of her privacy, the sadistic pornography of totalitarianism,' chortled Mr. Gray, who quickly put on a straight face and tried to sound grown-up about the whole thing: "Such subjects should not be denied to serious writers," he said solemnly, which meant that Paul Gray could go ahead and read the stuff because it was Serious. It was also utterly absurd, of course, and Mr. Gray probably knew it, really, because he kept pulling himself up short in order to make stern remarks about the wonderful way in which the book managed to "transcend titillation," though he was very careful not to say just who had been so extraordinarily titillated in the first place. Fortunately, the Amazed But Serious reviewer remembered to conclude his transcendental meditations with some quick chatter about "fusing the dreams of self with the nightmare of history," and after that everything was all right.

In those days, no review of a novel in which Dr. Freud was a character could be admitted to the circus if it did not contain the obligatory words about the Horror of History. The words were a sort of magic incantation, and they were used to turn dozens of prissy little erotic epics into Informed Beyond-Art. It was

this operation that Doris Grumbach was edeavoring to perform when she said that the book in question moved from "the sick so of one woman to the cosmic horror of man holocaustic violence against man." She mean that Mr. Thomas had killed off his sexy her ine in a Nazi concentration camp, after predictable adventures of the flesh that Mr. Grawould have been uniquely well qualified to describe. "What a splendid book!" whoope Ms. Grumbach, and then everybody wer under for the first time. They bobbed bacup again, but they were beginning to loopretty soggy.

One who stood and watched was Edith Mil ton of New York magazine, Like Ms. Grum bach, Ms. Milton was a former Information Officer who had moved over to the Office of Motivation and Instruction without abandon ing her easily imitable style in the process Ms. Milton was trying to dry off the storie of Nadine Gordimer, because "what motivate" these stories" was "a profound consciousnes of the strength of the insane systems by which society tries to protect its own interests, and a celebration of everything that refuses to be instructed by them or contained in their deadly limits." It went without saving that Ms. Gordimer's "fine and tragic vision" looked "on a time and place where no one wins, where love is the beginning of betraval and peace merely the starting point of hostility," and that kind of thing. And if one heard a few buzzes as the words trickled by, it was only because they had trickled by in such similar fashion so many times before. They were very like the words that the kids from the Saturday Review liked to dump all over the novels of Graham Greene, for example: "Books may mean what they say, and they may mean lots of other things; in this context, writer and reader become spies together, practicing for their difficult life in the world, juggling their double allegiance to an innocence that is not always an illusion and to a suspicion that is not always justified."

They were very like the words that trickled by when the omnipresent Jack Kroll of Newsweek went to see an adaptation of an old play by Frank Wedekind, a play that had thrilled the Krolls of 1904 because it had, in the late Jacob Hartmann's words, "gone further in depicting the unsavory side of sex relations than any other play in literature." Presumably Mr. Kroll was unfamiliar with Jacob Hartmann, because he was still being thrilled in the 1980s: the play constituted a "vision of woman as man's fantasy struggling to become her own reality." There it was again: "reality." Mr. Kroll was back at the same old stand,



When Mr.
Mailer wasn't
vending and
rumbling in
front of the
cameras, he
was writing
long books
about old movie stars and
selling pieces
of those books
towomen's
magazines.

rimarily because it had become the only tand in town. Just as he'd been afraid that 'purists' would laugh at the "high voltage of eality" that characterized his "Hamlet-chamion," so was he afraid that "purists" would nock the "high-voltage exchange of energy" hat marked the Vision of Woman as Man's antasv.

And yet Mr. Kroll knew reality when he aw it, that's what frustrated him so: reality vas "the modern world," the "maddening nélange of beauty and trash, promise and perersion," and the play had it, damn it, comlete with "cheap hooker," "punkish rock tar," "Son of Sam-type killer," "incestuous oster father," "lesbian lover," and all the rest of the familiar crew. It was all just too, too 'contemporary," or so Mr. Kroll kept telling nimself. There was an especially kicky scene vhere "art miscegenates with fashion," or omething, and then there were all those "shiftng levels of action that dislocate the perspecive with dizzying effect," and all in all it was exactly the sort of dizzying reality that got Mr. Kroll all-well, all dizzy. Why, the whole Irama was "challenging" the audience with 'the most inventive and exciting' play Mr. Kroll had seen that year, and he was all giggly nside, just like old times: "The viewers are either outraged or bowled over," he said hopefully, and Outraging and Bowling Over was 'exactly what a live contemporary theater is all about."

And so it was. It was for precisely that reason that "live contemporary theater," as Mr. Kroll understood it, had become an anachronism. It was for precisely that reason that Mr. Kroll's creaky enthusiasms-and his ritualistic language-had become so musty with the telltale odor of the anxious shocker who can no longer shock. Audiences just didn't want to be bowled over or outraged by Mr. Kroll and his playmates anymore. Everybody had been very polite about the whole thing for years, but they had also been secretly bored: if the kids couldn't learn to behave like little ladies and gentlemen when they were in the parlor, then it was time for them to go upstairs and shut the door behind them. There was going to be some grown-up talk.

### Desperate superlatives

HE LANGUAGE of Kroll and Grumbach -which is to say, the language of the expiring literary establishment-was the language of childhood precisely because it was the language of pretension: as a child will parrot the words of his or her parents without knowing what they mean, so did the cultural stragglers continue to repeat the phrases that had always sounded most important to their ears. They had become an interest group battling for their share of influence, seeking to preserve their sense of selfimportance by bullying an increasingly disgusted public into extending their mandate for another decade or two. The more they were called to account, the louder did they howl; the more they were asked to explain what they knew of art, the more did they inflate their language and disguise their lack of dis-

They spoke of "renewing one's sense of the possibilities of prose," of "illuminating the human condition," of "speaking to the humanity in us all"; and when they couldn't come up with a suitably amorphous buzz, they italicized an inappropriate verb or two as a show of lazy sincerity: "They express a robust joy in the thorough doing of a tale" (Walter Clemons, Newsweek).

The empty words were a defense against thought, because thought was the final enemy. Unabashed intellect, whatever its conclusions, seemed to terrify the members of the community, perhaps because it required them to react in an equally straightforward way. The idea was abroad in the frightened world that the direct and lucid expression of complex thought was somehow ... somehow unsophisticated. It would get you into trouble, make an easy target of you. They might try to say what they meant in Hoboken, but here, by God, we had learned to walk in the shadows, to hint softly through half-closed lips; and if there was less meaning than met the ear, or no meaning at all, we did not want to know about it.

But it had all been going on for too many years. When John Leonard of The New York Times said that a dreary novel of political scatology from Joseph Heller "requires us to revise our own imaginations," nobody wanted to revise. When Mr. Leonard told Esquire that he always read Colman McCarthy's columns because "whatever he wants to think about, I'm willing to think about in his prose rhythms," it was no longer precociously cute, it was just sticky-and it was sticky largely because it didn't mean anything. When Anatole Broyard of The New York Times said that the novelist John Casey was "equally good in describing the grandeur and the dandruff of the self," many readers thought vaguely of the new biotin shampoos before turning the page. When Brendan Gill of The New Yorker said of one of Mr. Casey's erotic epics that it showed "precisely how contemporary young



One had to feel a certain sympathy for the novelist and English professor John Gardner, who finally threw in his towel and decided that everything he'd ever read was 'immensely important.

When Robert Coover's dirty stories had first appeared in magazines like Cavalier and Playboy . . . they were just dirty stories, but by the time E. P. Dutton had shoved them between reasonably hard covers they had become 'fictions' that 'challenge the assumptions of our age.

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people—a generation of passionate truthtellers—respond to the sometimes delectable, sometimes anguished ripening of their bodies and minds," it was not just funny, it was genuinely embarrassing. It became more than embarrassing as the sixty-year-old Gill continued: "In and out of bed," giggled the veteran New Yorker, "how enviable his characters are in their determination to fulfill themselves!" Oh Good Lord Mr. Gill was trying to fulfill himself: "Hearing their voices, one would give anything to join them."

And so it went, from absurdity to embarrassment to excruciating boredom. As the American essavist Christian Bovee said, paraphrasing Swift: "There are few wild beasts more to be dreaded than a communicative man having nothing to communicate." So it was that when a reviewer for the Book-of-the-Month Club said that Mordecai Richler's latest Memorable Novel was "life-affirming," it was no longer a catchy phrase, it was merely offensive, intellectually and otherwise; and part of the reason it was offensive was that Mordecai Richler was a member of the Editorial Board of the Book-of-the-Month Club, Communicative men with nothing to communicate end up speaking to and about themselves: by 1980, the language of pretension existed for no other reason than to exalt itself, and thereby its practitioners.

ULTURAL WORK was easy work, and it was not surprising that everybody wanted a piece of the action: by the end of the 1970s, every idle college instructor in the land had collaborated on at least one innovative novel of scatology, every bubbly local activist had treated the community to a one-man or one-woman show at the local gallery, every bored graduate student had become the most important artist of his or her generation.

And why not? There were no entrance requirements, beyond a basic ability to arrange words or notes or colors in a reasonably imaginative way, and the pay was okay. It was not hard to write as well as or better than Vonnegut or Oates or Dickey or Beattie or any one of a thousand garrulous children of the electronic age: it was a snap to duplicate or improve on the sounds of early Foss or the visions of late Calder: it was but the work of a moment to outdistance the Grumbachs and the Leonards and the Krolls and the Kaels in their aimless raptures over random Illuminations of the Human Condition and incessant Affirmations of Life.

By 1980, there were at least two artists

in every garage and a philosopher in every not. The museum basements were closured with interchangeable twentieth-century masterworks, the library floors were piled high with last week's dazzling erotic epics, the theaters were thick with thousands of rudderless critics, the airwayes were cacophonous with the meaningless gobbles of cutout intellectuals and apprentice pundits, and still the stuff came spewing out. There was just no more room for all the genius: the citizenry was gagging as it tried to force the increasingly unpalatable debris down its own throat. and the cultural community was slowly choking to death on the fruits of its own democratization.

The problem was not just that everybody in the land was an artist: it was that everybody in the land was a great artist. Joyce Carol Oates, for instance, had written so many Immensely Important Informed Fictions that she had long since become, in John Gardner's somewhat flustered view, "one of the great writers of our time." Which wasn't saving much, in the era of universal and mandatory majesty. After all, P. D. James had only been writing mysteries for a few years, and the Wall Street Journal had already lifted her "to the ranks of the best novelists," right up there with the likes of Walker Percy ("the best novelist we now have," according to Jonathan Yardley of the Washington Star), William Burroughs ("our one genius," in the eves of Norman Mailer), and John Updike ("America's finest novelist" at the Washington Post, "second to none in our time" at the Hudson Review).

It was a time of desperate superlative, a time when John Leonard could say that the columnist Murray Kempton "writes better than anybody else," a time when Robert Penn Warren—himself "America's finest living poet," according to Random House—could say that Katherine Anne Porter had been "unsurpassed in our century or country—perhaps any time or country—as a writer of fiction in the short forms," only to be outclassed by Walter Clemons of Newsweek: "Elizabeth Bowen is simply one of the best story writers who ever lived."

This last was a variation on the Quite Simply Bluff, which was used to disarm the enemy whenever one was about to make a particularly sweeping award, as in "Quite simply, Dispatches is the best book to have been written about the Vietnam War" (The New York Times Book Review), or "John Hawkes and Kurt Vonnegut are simply the most original first-rate writers in this country" (this from John Irving, who had—quite simply—freaked



By the time 1980 rolled around, Joyce Carol Oates had written so many immensely important stories that they weren't even stories anymore; they were Fictions. nut on the "erotic power" of Mr. Hawkes's anguage). It showed up in National Review, if all places ("Henry Hazlitt is quite simply he best writer on economic subjects we have soing, and has been that for better than four lecades"), and Doris Grumbach used it to turn a sleazy novel of "troubled chaos, pornotraphic excess and psychic violence" into one more Grumbachian pussycat: "Quite simply, is the most imaginative, solid and satisfying novel of this year, or of the year past." And it finally found its way into the New York Review's subscription campaigns: "Quite simply, you don't pay a cent."

The Quite Simply Bluff was excessively precious Critic Talk for Let's Have A Moment of Awed Silence Here, and it was offensive pecause it was purposely used in precisely hose contexts where it should not have been used, where the issue was not Simple at all out rather the opposite. It also tended to look a bit silly when it was used to advertise every Major Prose Stylist in the fourth form.

HE SWARMS of Major Stylists were not only the best artists of their own time: they were the best of all time. When the rock critic who doubled as "literary editor" for Rolling Stone said that a long novel by John Irving had a "strange, Moby-Dick-like sense of completeness," nobody laughed, because nobody saw the joke. After all, the lad was just doing his bit for the defense of the realm, saving exactly the sort of thing that everybody had been taught to say: he knew that any long novel had to bear a resemblance to either Melville or Proust, because that's what those dudes wrote, you know -long novels, Just Like Mr. Irving. The man from Rolling Stone was just the newest member of a community that traced its understanding of art and life to vague memories of grand titles on a tenth-grade reading list, and elevated that understanding to a principle of criticism and finally of survival.

It was this principle that prompted John Irving to say of an interminable erotic saga by John Casey that it "closely resembles Remembrance of Things Past"; that required the poet James Dickey to say of an old war novel by Thomas Boyd that there was "no battle scene in Tolstoy's War and Peace to equal the drama and terror of Boyd's account"; that encouraged Leonard Michaels to say in The New York Times Book Review that a dreary scatological farce from Joseph Heller "combined Einstein's theory of relativity with Kafka's agonies"; that permitted a staff writer for the Saturday Review to say of a memoir by

Oriana Fallaci that it was "a work of transcendent Greek tragedy"; that permitted Seymour Krim to say in the Washington Post that William Burroughs smacked of "Theodore Dreiser at his most powerful"; that permitted the novelist Paul Theroux to say of a new travel book that it was "as wise as Walden"; and that encouraged a Newsday critic to say that a new adventure by Philip Caputo was reminiscent of "the best of Joseph Conrad."

Before it was all over, even Ellen Goodman found herself saving that Picasso "dominates art the way Shakespeare dominates literature or Mozart dominates music," confirming widespread suspicions that even the smartest members of the class (and Ms. Goodman was pretty smart) knew almost as much about art as they did about music. "The worst of this artist is very, very good," announced Ms. Goodman, in her own variation on the Quite Simply Bluff. Ms. Goodman's remarks were interesting precisely because they did come from a writer of her intelligence. As Waugh put it: "The large number of otherwise cultured and intelligent people who fall victims to Señor Picasso are not posers. They are genuinely 'sent,' It may seem preposterous to those of us who are immune, but the process is apparently harmless. They emerge from their ecstasy as cultured and intelligent as ever. We may even envy them their experience. But do not let us confuse it with the sober and elevating happiness which we derive from the great masters."

The spectacle of 1980 was the spectacle of a community that could no longer "emerge from the ecstasy": just as the adolescent who has memorized all the imposing titles on his reading list gradually comes to believe that he has actually read the books and absorbed their message, so had the twentieth-century Homers finally come to believe in their own cultural fantasies.

Art was . . . art, or something

VERYBODY KNEW that something was horribly, horribly wrong, but it was the nature of the disease that nobody in charge had any idea what it was. Indeed, editors and museum directors and publishers were particularly hard hit, and particularly bewildered. "Here we sit," said the fiction editor of the Minnesota Review: "small publication, don't pay anything, no fame—and in the last month before our deadline for the fiction issue, we received about three hundred stories, perhaps fifty good ones and a couple of dozen very good ones. Where are all those people? Who's reading them? Whom



NIt was ever so much safer to be Informed. It was this spirit that prompted a professor named George Hunt to insist that John Updike's tales of cunnilingus were 'informed' by 'Nature.'

When the rock critic who doubled as 'literary editor' for Rolling Stone said that a long novel by John Irving had a 'strange, Moby-Dicklike sense of completeness,' nobody laughed, because nobody saw the joke. Bryan Griffin
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are they writing for?" The problem, of course, was not so much that the editor of the Minnesota Review had received three hundred stories, but that the editor of the Minnesota Review actually thought that fifty of the stories were "good," and that twenty-four of them were "very good." Not just literate, or readable—but very good.

It was an absurdity that could only have been uttered by a man in his "profession": no military commander would have been silly enough to imply that there were fifty men in the outfit who would make good generals, no professor of biology would have risked his scientific reputation by saving that there were fifty future prizewinners among his students. or even among all the students in the country. The difference between the average biologist and the average writer or editor was that the biologist still remembered (a) what he was supposed to be doing; (b) why he was doing it; and (c) how he would be able to tell whether he had done it or not. The dilemma of the cultural establishment was the dilemma of the biologist who has been told that because biology is an inexact science, all scientific procedures have been abolished, and that henceforth all prizes are to be awarded by lottery.

This was the dilemma Jay Neugeboren was up against when he edited a special issue of Ploughshares magazine, an issue devoted entirely to fiction. Writing in the Nation, Mr. Neugeboren said that he'd received more than nine hundred submissions, and that "within the first six weeks, when I'd read perhaps fifty manuscripts, I could have put together an issue of a dozen stories that I would have been proud of and whose quality would have been, in my opinion, superior to most issues of Story, and equal to the general level of recent volumes of Best Stories." Poor Mr. Neugeboren still had five months and eight hundred and fifty manuscripts to go; in the end, he didn't even bother to open the last five hundred envelopes. There was desperation in the air: "Where, I kept asking myself-and others-were all these good writers coming from, and who were they? Why were there so many good stories looking for a home? ... Why ... did these writers keep writing? Why did they keep submitting?"

Mr. Neugeboren's problem was the curse of the community, and one of the hidden sources of all the panic. "I had to make choices, and I was reading many stories that, though I didn't especially like them, were clearly well written, original, sometimes dazzling. Were some of these stories nevertheless deserving of publication, because they were so accomplished, even though they did not especially

appeal to me?" The poor chap didn't know you see, he didn't know how to tell whethe something was good or not, how to tell wheth er it was "deserving" of publication or not all he had to go on were some vague sensa tions of "liking" or "disliking," but he didn' really know why he liked or disliked. For al he knew, maybe everything was "deserving' of publication: after all, there were no rules were there? It was art, wasn't it? And art was ... art was ... art was art, or something.

Mr. Neugeboren was a well-intentioned manand his confusion was understandable, if not harmless. All he wanted to know was, Howcould you tell? How did one define the difference between mediocrity and genius, between professionalism and talent, between entertainment and art; how did one know where and when to make the assumption of significance? If styles had become interchangeable, if the overt expression of intellect was an embarrassment, if ethical conclusions were disallowed

-how could you tell?

Mr. Neugeboren solved his immediate problem in the same way that most of his colleagues had solved theirs: he decided to approve stories that were about "loss, exile, displacement," though he did not say what he meant by the redundant trinity, nor why stories that embodied it were particularly "deserving of publication." It was just that these exile stories "moved" Mr. Neugeboren, and "drove" him. They were "central" to, um, "something" in Mr. Neugeboren, and he was willing to "trust" that "centrality," which was also a "sensibility." And a damn good thing, too, or he'd have had to open the other five hundred envelopes, and the issue still wouldn't be on the stands.

In the eleventh hour, the New York Times Book Company addressed itself to a trembling community. "What you need," thundered the company, "is a team of experts with impeccable taste who can unerringly steer you to the winners and keep you from the losers." The company had just the experts for an ailing nation, and by a happy coincidence they all worked for The New York Times: "See how Anatole Broyard, Christopher Lehmann-Haupt, John Leonard and other respected literati rate the new releases," said the publishers, spinning the wheel of chance. All the "muchquoted critics" who were "acknowledged" to be "among the most authoritative in the nation" were going to do their bit and "provide their final word on the blockbusters-and the bombs." After all, there were tough times ahead, and the community was going to have to hang together if it was to survive at all. "Even if you don't find time to read the book, a



One of the soggiest of the literary refugees was the ubiquitous Doris Grumbach, who was trying to dry off her intellectual reputation with one of D. M. Thomas's Erotic Epics.

ou'll learn enough to navigate successfully at he most 'glamorous' cocktail party," promised

ne company.

Indeed, it was an indication of the extent f the demoralization that the admen were villing to drop all the old facades and come ight out in front of everybody with the bit bout the cocktail parties. But then, perhaps he company was only trying to catch up with he New York Review of Books, which was naking a big dent in the cultural cocktail narket by offering partygoers a "specially esigned bookbag of heavy navy blue canvas 7ith beige straps," sporting the "distinctive Vew York Review logo." It would hold "books, rench bread, a bottle of wine, the New York leview." Not that there was anything esecially unpleasant about a navy blue canas bookbag with beige straps. Unfortunately, his particular navy blue canvas bookbag with eige straps featured a "caricature of Shakepeare, also in beige," and there was somehing unpleasant about that. There was somehing deadly about that.

HE NEW YORK REVIEW and The New York Times were announcing, somewhat belatedly, what had been embar- rassingly clear to the rest of the world or a long time: that the literary community vas not, in fact, a particularly bookish comnunity. It had been years since the blue-bagging literary partygoers had actually bothered o read one another's dreary publications, just is it had been years since any of them had actually acted upon a real idea (let alone ordered their lives upon one). Books were not for reading, and ideas were not a basis for ife; books were for talking and shouting about, and an idea was something you passed around with the pistachios and the burnt peanuts, until you grew tired of sniffing at it (after which it became something you had "been through").

This would have been fine (given the quality of the books and the childishness of the ideas), had it not been for all the worthy writers who were being ignored or shoved into the corner in the process—all the writers who were more interested in being read than in being talked about, who exhibited an eccentric desire to write sentences and paragraphs rather than Bombs and Blockbusters. If the aging literary butterflies had been paying more attention to where their anti-intellectualism was taking them, they wouldn't have been getting in the way of grown-up folk like J. I. M. Stewart and Gabriel Fielding and Evelyn Page and Gerald Warner Brace and

Lord Blake and Lady Snow and Fred Uhlman and Michael Campbell and John E. Mack and Leslie Croxford and Roger Cleeve and ... well, anyone who actually reads books can complete the list with his or her own choices, with the names of sharp and conscientious writers who were (and are) more interested in casting light than in precipitating a literary riot on the verandas of Nantucket or in the faculty lounges of New Jersey or southern California.

These writers were possessed of varying degrees of grace and intelligence and perception and imagination and purpose, but all of them, at one level or another, had something grownup to say; and-just as importantly-all of them wanted their readers to understand what they were saying. It followed that few of the honest names were household words in 1980. Genuine purpose is, after all, incompatible with panic-because panic itself is the enemy of historical, philosophical, and literary perspective. Said Ruskin: "In all the arts and acts of life, the secret of high success will be found, not in a fretful and various excellence. but in a quiet singleness of justly chosen aim." Voices worth listening to are almost always quiet voices, and quiet voices cannot easily be heard when a riot is in progress-or when a party is breaking up.

HE DISHONOR was not in the confusion but in the ritualistic character of that confusion; not in the appalling cultural, scientific, and historical ignorance but in the refusal to mend that ignorance; not in the incompetence but in the exaltation of that incompetence; not in the mediocrity of execution, but in the meanness of intention. Long-running farce finally became intellectual tragedy when a wisely anonymous essayist from Time magazine pulled out all the stops and declared that the star of the science-fiction film The Empire Strikes Back was the "unpretentious cinematic heir" to such pretentious heroes as "Prometheus, Jason, Aeneas, Sir Galahad, John Bunyan's pilgrim." The writer was kind enough to say that "the adventures of Luke Skywalker" bore "only a superficial resemblance to the quest of Homer's kingly man," but typical enough to insist that both tales drew "from the same deep wells of mythology, the unconscious themes that have always dominated history on the planet," harrumph. Which was exactly what one would have expected from the magazine that had helped to call the original party to order back in 1927 by announcing that the poet Robinson Jeffers ranked with "Homer and Sophocles," and indeed with "the greatest



When Brendan Gill of The New Yorker said of one of Mr. Casey's erotic epics that it showed 'precisely how contemporary young people . . . respond to the sometimes delectable. sometimes anguished ripening of their bodies and minds, ' it was not just funny, it was genuinely embarrassing.

Bryan Griffin PANIC AMONG THE PHILISTINES poets of all generations." All in all, it was not so surprising that the Homeric Age that had begun with Robinson Jeffers should end with Artoo Detoo. But there was shame in it.

To speak of this shame-to speak, that is, of a general artistic, intellectual, and cultural collapse-is really, as we have seen, to speak of a literary failure of almost unimaginable proportion. Genuine culture, like the men and women who possess it, may be timeless and enduring, but such culture is only as important (or as weak) in the life of a nation as the books and plays and magazines and newspaners that embody and distribute its values. Accordingly, while it is not expected of every age that it be capable of producing good art. it is demanded of the literary establishment of every age that it at least keep the memory and the standard of good art always before itself, well polished and clearly labeled. A literary establishment that cannot do this-which is to say, a literary establishment that does not know what art looks like-can only work with what happens to be lying around at the moment; such a community feeds only on itself, and dies as its members retire; leaving no cultural legacy.

That was the source of all the trouble in the early 1980s, of course: the halls were clogged with idle men and women who wanted desperately to read and write, and there were lots and lots of pens and typewriters-but there was nothing to write about. The hangers-on of the postwar cultural establishment, the pursedlipped reviewers and the popular book clubs and the erotic periodicals, were still awake and kicking, albeit somewhat feebly, but the artists themselves-the once-powerful craftsmen and the once-original thinkers-were no longer around to be worshiped. It was all over: from Ginsberg to Mailer to Henry Moore, from Warhol to Existentialism to Updike, the names and postures that had been held aloft by the cult of the middlebrow for forty years or more had suddenly, almost without exception, become objects of general intellectual ridicule -and there was nothing around to take their place. Irreverent newcomers were trying to keep a straight face in front of the Vonneguts and the Roths and the Jongs and the Doctorows, and yawning while the Mailers and the Capotes chattered on and on about Marilyn Monroe, and everywhere there was a sneaking fear that the half century of aberrant art was going to turn out to be just that: an aberration.

It was this fear that was sparking the sillier manifestations of literary perversity and hysteria, as the intellectual beneficiaries of the postwar establishment, the third-generation imitators and the aging camp followers, began to suspect that they had missed the turning the tide, and that their exposure was going be a bitter one. Most knew that it was all ove but nobody wanted to say it, because noboc could afford to say it: there were long caree and swollen reputations at stake, and mothan a few bucks as well. As the darknet closed in, everybody was still scribbling friously, and the shell of the literary community still stood, apparently solid, like the hul of a gutted ship. But there was no longer any body in the engine room.

N THE WEEKS and months to come, the wretched representatives of the old orde would seek to perpetuate their origins error and evade the judgment of tim by struggling almost obsessively against their unseen enemies (who turned out to be every body who was or ever had been or ever would be on dry land), and against the increasingly remote possibility of rescue. In the process they would seek to escape, and even revoke the ineluctable truths of art and philosophy they would despoil the meaning and negati the usefulness of the past with the confusions of the present; and before it was all over they would try to regain the attention (and the dollars) of their somnolent peers by taking of the last of their gaudy pretenses and doing the ancient bump and grind of the fading literary charlatan, right up there on the best-seller chart. It would be a fleshy display of spiritual and intellectual flab such as had never been seen before and would quite possibly never be seen again in the gardens of the West, the final orgiastic blast of the period of suspended cultural adolescence that had been conceived in the 1890s, stroked and nurtured in the pause between the world wars, and finally honored in the chaos of the nuclear age.

In indulging themselves in the final literary debauch, the Keepers of the Adolescence would abase their countrymen, demolish what remained of their own intellectual integrity and literary reputation, and finally deliver the body of the aberrant regime to the depths of the historical seas, bereft of even the little honor it had gathered unto itself in the dreary decades of moral flippancy and artistic deceit. The open-mouthed watchers on the shores of the real world would have found it hard to credit, at the time, but the most horrible acts of exhibitionism were still to come, in the final manic performance of the departing cultural administration; and the literary state of the English-speaking world was going to get much worse before it began-almost imperceptibly,

at first-to get better.

HARPER'S AUGUST 1981

## ARS POLITICA



# **GOD'S MARVELOUS PLAN**

A story

by Larry Heinemant

NE COOL, DARK NIGHT Colonel Hubbel leaned back in his black canvas chair and called Lieutenant Stennett, the Alpha Company commander, saying the lieutenant and his company—us grunts—should mosey down to Fire Base Harriette the next day, reconnoitering on the way, to see if we could draw some fire.

Now, every man in the company knew that Fire Base Harriette was a regular piece of cake. Fire Base Carolyne, for instance (directly to the north of our base camp at Phuc Luc), straddled a VC supply route—the fire fights commenced at dusk and did not cease until first light the next morning. And Fire Base Francesca, due east, attracted every hoshot sniper in the countryside—we crawled on our bellies to chow and the latrine and everywhere. But spending the evening at Fire Base Harriette was the same as going home and spending the evening in the house where you grey up.

We loaded our rucksacks cramful, saddled up, and hit the trail. We walked past the Phuc Luc Base Camp PX, waving our good-byes to the chippies who worked the checkout counters. We passed through the high barbed-wire fence at the main gate and sauntered through the gauntlet of car-wash and hand-laundry shantytown whorehouses ("Going to Fire Base Harriette?" the whores all asked, grinning big under their cone hats and piling cases of cold beer on their Hondas. "See you there!"). When we crossed the river, we came to a narrow ox-cart trail that meandered this way and that all the way to Harriette, through a wide, sunny panorama of gently sloping, broadly terraced rice fields nearing their yield. stretching from one dense woodline of the Goongone Forest, way yonder, to the other woodline of the Goongone, opposite. Here and there in the distance tiny hamlets lay under lush, abundant shade; Brahman cattle and huge, flat-horned water buffalo browsed casually on small parcels of high ground.

After humping for two and a half hours, w came to the tumbledown, ramshackle roadsid hamlet of Ham Lom. The company hung hard left along a footpath between two bam boo hedgerows, past the old French fort-it thick, stuccoed walls fuzzy with bright green moss and cascades of greenery pouring through the high iron gun slits-a spooky place buil before most of us were born and abandoned before we started school. Fire Base Harriette occupied a low, clear quarter-acre rise (as smooth as the top of a bleached skull) no twenty meters from the jungle woodline. Be fore us stood tens of thousands of acres of the virtually impenetrable Goongone Forest; behind us were thousands of acres of rice paddies. We moved in automatically and set up among the dozen or so perimeter bunkers and gun positions, heavily fortified with thick timbers and plenty of sandbags, and connected by elaborate, chest-high trenches. From overhead Fire Base Harriette looked something like the cap of a cheap pepper shaker. After clearing away the flotsam left by the last bunch, we settled in for our late-morning naps. The villagers and whores followed us and stood at a reasonable distance, hawking icecold beers and cokes, fuck books and haircuts, back rubs and blow jobs. In the shade of the command bunker at the crest of the hill Lieutenant Stennett cranked up the phone and called Colonel Hubbel to report that there was nothing to report. Then he stretched out in the cool dirt, pulled his floppy slouch hat over his eyes, and fell into a light, pleasant doze. He called the colonel again around 4:00 and reported for the second time that there was nothing much to report. And after a light supper that night, he called the colonel one last time, saying that there was still nothing to report, and that he, Lieutenant Stennett,

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as setting the guard for the night and turng in. He wished the colonel a good evening id retired, loosening his bootlaces, then lying ack and pulling his blanket neatly to his chin. he whole company waited eagerly until he as fast asleep, and then slipped into Ham om to party and carry on and what not with e whores by the light of kerosene lamps, atil the beer was gone. We snuck back into imp, smiling big among ourselves. We quickly t the guard for the night, laid our bedrolls the hard ground just behind the perimeter ench, loosened our bootlaces, and turned in -our legs looking like the many spokes of a heel as we soundly slept, our heads turned ward the hub.

OME TIME LATER the guards turned away from their positions around the perimeter trench and woke the rest of the company, slapping our boots or ulling at trouser cuffs, saying, "Hey, Jack, e got movement!" We rose on our elbows, linking and rubbing our eyes, and replied, You're hearing things, my man. This is Hariette, remember? We can't have movement!

Stop horsing around, will you!" And we lay back down, but then we all heard it. That unmistakable hush in the woods: the harsh, muffled whispers; the careless, costly misstep; the soft brush of metal through foliage. "Good God!" we heard Lieutenant Stennett say. "Great balls of fire! Movement!" We imagined, rightly, hundreds of men coming through the woods straight at us. The whole company, moving as one man-steady and sure-slipped nimbly feet first into the bunkers and gun positions. Instantly, we brought our machine guns and rifles and grenade launchers and well-oiled shotguns to the ready, the safeties smoothly clicked off. We crouched shoulder to shoulder behind the rough burlap sandbags, hand grenades (frags, we called them) nervously, easily poised for the lob to the woodline trees. Lieutenant Stennett hunched over his radio microphone, hoarsely whispering map coordinates to every piece of artillery within radio range. A furious cannonade would commence the instant any zip showed his face (more fun than a turkey shoot, the gun crews said among themselves). The company hotly licked its lips, licked its mustaches, with tongues thick as paste.

"One instant we scream our lungs flat, and then we are dead and gone."



Larry Heinemann GOD'S MARVELOUS PLAN

We heard the VC mortar crews dropping the first mortar rounds into their tubes with a clear click. We heard the nearly simultaneous thump and whomp, and then all hell broke loose. There they were with their automatic Kalashnikovs and rocket-propelled grenades and what looked like Browning automatic rifles and plain old hand grenades; we had our M-16s and M-60 machine guns, our shotguns and frags, 105 and 155 howitzers and 8-inch cannon ("Big Mama" and "Dooley" and "Bristol's Stomp") all the way from Phuc Luc. Soon the sky blazed with a keen silver light from dozens of illumination rounds that gave everything a sour, deathly pallor, and showered us with sputtering chunks of phosphorous ash. The air smelled of gunpowder and scorched iron, and was soon thick with the smell of blood. It was hard to hear yourself think above the shrill screaming and shouting of commands, the constant crackle of rifle shots in both ears and the booming explosions that rang and reverberated like lightning. It was hard to see for the gunpowder smoke and dust kicked up by all the muzzle flashes. You stood stooped behind those rough sandbag revetments, pulling off well-aimed shots as quickly as you could squeeze the trigger. There was never a lack of targets-and if there was you popped off rounds at the wounded lying everywhere, until they stopped their squirming and their incessant vammering. You felt your hand cramp, hard, as you reloaded magazine after magazine.

Then wham-slam-your sore, aching eve (the bad eye those goddamn army doctors told you to never mind) terrifically explodes, goes dead, and you feel your face droop like a gob of warmed wax. You feel the sharp sting and tingle when the burning-hot rifle slug pierces your eyeball, your head, and goes clean through and out the back-blowing your helmet off as though it had been flipped up with a good swift kick. The concussion blows you out of the trench, knocking the wind out of you. The cool of the dirt seeps through your bloody shirt and into your back, like soapy water drawn into a sponge. Your hands curl into fists, clawing hard at the dirt. You suck breath through a pinched gullet, trying to get your wind back for a scream, listening to your own trembling death rattle, like buttons and pebbles and pins stirred round in a tin.

You watch through the blood and dust with your one good eye, and listen tensely, suddenly aware of a peculiar roaring buzz that you have never heard before. It becomes an overwhelming, ear-piercing whine that you would swear was splitting your head wide open. The sound cannot be just the mortars

or the howitzers or the cannon, or everything at once. It cannot be a single homb or a hu dred bombs; it is a wild shitstorm of bomb Everyone looks up. GIs and zips, and know it is every goddamn incoming round left creation, a ball-busting cataclysm. The ver ground you lie on heaves up, and your bod gives way, as though someone has dropped spot of dirt into a tall, clear glass of waterbits of mud trail behind that spot until dissolves and nothing reaches bottom but swirling film. Everything-the woods and th village and us with it-is heaved up an plowed under; one instant we take a breath we scream our lungs flat, and then we are deal and gone.

Y MAN PACO, not dead, but sure a shit should be, lies flat on his back and wide to the sky with slashing lacerations, big watery burn blisters and broken, splintered, ruined legs. He wallow in this greasy, silken muck that covers him (and everything else for a stone's throw) and dries to a stinking, sandy crust. He lies there that night and all the next day, the next night and half the second day with his heels hooked on a gnarled, charred (nearly fire-hardened) vine root, immobile. And he comes to consciousness in the dark of that first long night. with a heavy dew already soaked through the rags of his clothes, and he doesn't know what hit him. (Am I ever fucked up, he thinks to himself, but he doesn't so much say this or even think this as he imagines looking down at his own body, seeing-vividly-every gaping shrapnel nick, every puckery burn scar, every splintery, compounded fracture.)

At first he concentrates his whole considerable attention to listening—for the cries, the hoarse, gulped breathing, the whispering supplication of the other wounded, for water, for Jigs the medic, for God's simple mercy. (I swear you have not heard anything in this life until you have heard small clear voices in the dark of the night, "Help me, please," though they say that the crying of wounded horses is worse.) Paco waits, with closed eyes and stilled breath, to shiver and be appalled at the dry, raspy voices; waits to whisper back quickly in answer.

So Paco lies there, nearly motionless because of the pain (ticking like a living thing—until he comes to understand it as a living thing, as if some small animal with bristling, matted fur had snuggled up to him for warmth) and stares, marveling, into the black and vaulted heavens, his vision blurred by blood and dust.

The next morning the sun rises cleanly, ickly burning off the misted dew, and slant-gly strikes his blistered face, but he cannot ise his arm out of the muck to cover his es. And all that hot, bright day the sun ines in his eyes as sharply as salt, and the ars of his bitter, crushing pain stream into s hair and his scalp itches powerfully. By e middle of the afternoon he is covered with 188 drawn by the stench—big black deer flies at tiny, translucent maggots, small gnats at bite, like hard mean pinches, which imediately become stinging welts and soon beme raw and infected, drawing pus at the ast touch.

Paco lies virtually stock still all the second ght and half the second day, burning with ver and as good as delirious. And Bravo ompany (which doesn't have so much as a of to piss in or a window to throw it out )—and its young and skinny exhausted edic—comes looking for what is left of Alpha ompany, but they don't find Paco until nearly yon, and he is only barely alive.

HE BRAVO COMPANY medic who found Paco will tell the story of it (years later) in Coolidge's Bar and Grill, time and time again. It will be late ternoon. A strong, clean north light comes the large, plain storefront windows with coad, water-spotted sills crowded with potted eraniums and African violets and tall spiny pleus. The light will catch the metal edges of ie tables, the curved tops of the bentwood nairs, and will give a fine sheen to the scuffed lank floor. The medic, older and rounder and labby, sits slouched, leaning back in one of ie creaking chairs and eating ice-cold hardoiled eggs (each bite dipped in sea salt and arnished with hot mustard). All that afteroon and evening he will drink mug after mug f beer with shots of whiskey or schnappsoilermakers-and he will drink them hard.

"We were in the bushes for two solid nonths, that time, up around the Goongone orest," the medic will begin, slurping at some pam. "And every fucken day for the first ineteen days it's me dusting off KIA, Killed a Action, dead guys you understand?, and younded too. We were getting contact every ay good and steady," the medic will say every ime he tells it, taking a moment to drop a thiskey, shot glass and all, into his beer, Tracking a VC company they fucken tell us, and guys're dropping like flies, Jack—ordinary mbushes, sniper fire, claymore mines as big stractor tires, dumb-ass fire-fight heroes, ourrible heat exhaustion. Guys with their heads

cracked open like walnuts, bleeding from the ears. Guys with their chests squashed flat from booby-trapped bombs. Mean and evil blood all over everything and my ass in it up to the elbows. I still dream about it nights—night-mare monsters that smell to high heaven, nasty whirligig-looking machines that keep snatching at you, witches with the evil eye that give you cold sweats and shivers so bad you think you got some dynamite dose of malaria. Shit, you name it!

"After a while the company gets up in the morning, every fucken morning, and waits for the motherfucker to settle somewhere. Some days we never had to leave our encampment. Blam, some poor fucken fool would buy it eating breakfast-nothing left of him but the spoon. I'd wrap the sonsabitches up and shoot them up, whispering, 'Naw, you ain't gonna die,' you poor dumb fucker, 'Trust me!' and they'd smile right back at me, 'Thanks,' like they really believed that bullshit line, and then their eyes would roll back into their heads ('Thanks'), and their heads would roll back on their shoulders ('Thanks'), and they'd pass out from shock and die before the dust-off medivac chopper could haul ass out to us. And the captain would be having one of his famous conniption fits, screaming some gibberish nonsense into the radio, then he'd get pissed and throw the microphone down and kick it, and then he'd throw his hat down and kick it. 'These goddamn people are holding up this whole fucken war!' he'd say, meaning the dust-off choppers.

"And sometimes the dust-off came in time, but that wasn't no fucken guarantee. We'd load the dude up, and ten minutes later the captain would get some half garbled radio message that the guy was DOA—dead on arrival—croaked halfway there. He'd call me over and have a shit fit reading me the riot act, complete with bugged eyes and bloody foam at the mouth from his bad gums. He was

definitely crazy.

"One KIA a day, Jack, every fucken day," the medic will say, and shake his head at the bartender. The bartender will put a mug to the tap and pull. "Morning, noon, and night. Shit fire!"

"Then one night we are listening to Alpha Company doing it hot and heavy, and they were getting down and getting some, but then Ka-bar-room-room-room! This incredible fucken noise—I mean I've heard some incoming, but that must have been something. We got a radio message from Colonel Hubbel to check it out—he can't get Alpha Company on the radio. The captain got up. 'Shit! Why can't that old fart get off his own miserable

"Why ain't he dead? Why didn't he bleed to death?"

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dead ass for once and hop his fucken chopper and do it himself. And why can't he pick on somebody else for a change. All right, get up! he said, 'Let's go,' and went around kicking at people.

"The captain was antsy anyway, a real eager beaver when you got right down to it-looking for his Purple Hearts and his medals-so we saddled up and started off in the middle of the night. Well, shit fire, we got about 200 meters downrange when the point squad stepped in some shit—a three-man ambush just buried in this shitstorm of frags. But we had one KIA and two wounded. The cap got all pissed off and had another shit bt, and we didn't get going again until after daybreak. We thrashed around in those fucken woods-the Goongone Forest, you understand?-that night, the next day, the next night, and that day. And we were always lost. I swear to God. Iack, there were more dumb fucks per square inch in Bravo Company than anywhere. The cap would flip open the bullshit company compass and sight it on the company map, gawking at the numerals on the dial, and thinking to himself, 'What is this goddamn gizmo? Some kind of chickenshit Cracker Jack prize?' He would bang it against his leg, like it was waterlogged and maybe that would help. Then he'd have another shit fit, kicking stumps and throwing food and so forth, but then he'd take a drink of water and simmer down, and we'd proceed."

The medic carefully cracks the hard-boiled eggs, then twists the shells back and forth so that they will be rendered neatly in two.

"Well, finally late in the morning of the second day we found Fire Base Harriette and what was left of Alpha Company, which wasn't much more than a smell I couldn't begin to compare to anything I've smelled since. There was nothing there, Jack, not even the village or the French fort, just this one guy, that poor dumb fucker, Alpha Company got wiped out. The whole company, except for this one cat, caught some mean kind of shit and every swinging dick but him bought the motherfucker. Why ain't he dead? He had a fucken day and a half. Why didn't he bleed to death? Why ain't he shriveled up with heat stroke? That place stank to high heaven. He stank to high heaven. I often wonder why we didn't keep fucken walking. A bunch of us stood where we jolly well knew the command bunker should have been-everybody's pulled time at Harriette. We took one good look around us-no bunkers, no trenches, almost no woodline-and knew we weren't going to find enough of those guys to fill a dozen peck baskets." The medic will lean back in his chair and look up at the hartender who listens for the hundredth time, blandly looking aroul his bar and counting the chairs the medic has emptied.

N THAT DAY at Harriette the captain (a robust and thoughtful man, asto ished and enraged, bewildered as infuriated by his continuing bad luc -irritated to distraction) stood with the medic and the radio man and the others ne the command bunker, teetering on a chur of timber with his thumbs hooked on h rucksack straps-his rucksack crammed as ful and piled as high as any rucksack in his conpany. He gazed around at the carnage an wreckage and thought to himself, this is mean way to die and a rotten goddamn pied of luck to be sure, but thank the mother of God, at least this one time it isn't me and mind

"And when we found that guy who survive that shitstorm," the medic says, resuming brushing bits of egg volk out of his mustache "he was piping hot and still pouring swear mumbling gibberish and crying. He wasn't wearing his dogtags like he was supposed to so God only knew who he was. But why he wasn't dead is anybody's guess. I didn't know and I didn't want to know. He looked up a me, trying to be friendly somehow or other And he knew he was fucked up. It didn't take no genius. His legs were so torn up, like some one would snap twigs for kindling, that the sonsabitching dust-off medics slipped him into a spare body bag to save everything but his asshole-though he still had his cock and his balls, you understand. And the rest of him looked like someone had taken off after him with one of those long-handled mallets you tenderize meat with.

"Anyway, I took one good long look at the guy, flies and bugs on him so thick he was a blur-fuzzy-and I've fucken had it."

The young medic stood with the captain and the rest, staring down at Paco, and a wave of saddening disgust went through him that drained the blood from his face, and he was revolted, defeated.

"I turned to the other company medic, this Conscientious Objector, and said, 'Fuck this, Jack-or whatever your name is-you do it. I'm goddamn sick and fucken tired of these sonsabitches dying on me. I ain't gonna eat this shit anymore. I quit . . . "

But the Conscientious Objector fumbled and grab-assed, nervous and humiliated, and generally made such a muddle of it that the first medic finally pushed him aside and finished, applying what aid he could. He asked Paco

hat happened here? Who are you? What the ck happened?" But all Paco did was cry andy tears-his mouth watering with tears. ne medic waited, slumped over Paco, until e medivac dust-off chopper came-wiping 1co's blackened, sun-blistered face with a ater-soaked shirttail that stung Paco's cheeks d felt gritty and raw on his dry and stiff eeding lips. When the dust-off came skidng in on the fly and settled into the crusted uck of Fire Base Harriette, first ankle-deep id then shin-deep, the dust-off medics glanced own at the Bravo Company medic with that rick and pitiful look. The young medic atched the chopper medics (wearing o.d. shirts and spiffy trousers and clean, wellnded jungle boots) slip Paco gingerly into spare body bag up to his waist. He helped couple of Bravo Company troopers tote the tter (which they dropped down a rainslick otpath, and Paco started screaming bloody urder), and helped secure the litter to the ick in the chopper. Then he turned and alked back to his rucksack and aid bag, his oots crunching in the crusted slime as though were a frozen field of blizzard snow. The ust-off rose barely inches off the ground. anting forward—dipping forward with a long weep-and moved off, making speed and ltitude surely. The chopper medics stood next Paco's litter, trying to soothe his hoarse, ysterical crying as best they could, and looked ut and down at the smooth sandy ground nd the bare heads and bare backs of the ravo Company troopers as they went about icking up the pieces of combat-loss equipent and gear, and collecting scraps of corpses nd chunks of carcases into body bags. The hopper circled wide of the encampment and ver the jungle out of the smell, barely skimning the woodline trees and making them illow. As the chopper swept along the medics nicked bugs and jungle junk out of Paco's vounds firmly and precisely, thinking to themelves that at least it isn't a dozen guys-the loor smeared with blood and that bloody ungle stink in their clothes and hair and nustaches all goddamn day. The medic hovered around the Bravo Com-

jestions, speaking hoarsely, "Who are you?

The medic hovered around the Bravo Company radio, expecting to hear that our man Paco died on the chopper—why should the wentieth sorry son-of-a-bitch be any different? Exhausted and numb and suffocatingly hot aching with anticipation—he fully expected to hear that everything but that Alpha Company man's asshole got blown away in the breeze, like so much bloody confetti, what with the chopper pilot hauling ass hell-for-leather, the way they did, back to the evacuation hospital with the doors as wide open as a ditch sluice. In his mind's eye, the medic would always imagine the dust-off medics pissing and moaning for days after about the blood slopped all over the inside—though there was little—remarking among themselves about that poor dumb fucker from the Alpha Company holocaust surviving all that shit and two days' exposure, and was he ever a fucking mess. And then when the best part of him blows away in the chopper rotor wash—the medic would imagine this too—he hears them grumble, sidemouthed, "Ain't gonna bet on this guy. Won't make it much past the triage, you ask me. He'll be pushing up daisies by supper-time, sure."

"There goes the company jinx, now maybe our luck will change."

HAT NIGHT, in the blessed privacy and quiet of the darkness (in a steady monsoon downpour, every man in Bravo Company sitting sullen and sleepless, and the medic glancing constantly in the direction of the company radio, expecting to hear, still, of the death of that Alpha Company man—the waiting really galling him now), the medic suffered a heart attack. There were sharp, sustained, crushing chest pains, stuttered breathing, a tingling numbness down his left arm and that side of his face, a shockingly severe and prolonged acute shortness of breath, and he grimaced and puzzled over it, but then guessed it; a heart attack, a thrombosis. And in the bright, crisp light of morning with the monsoon clouds clearing away to the west, the medic rose, stretched, and yawned (with the overwhelming nausea of the thrombosis still rising powerfully in his throat). He looked around, sourfaced, at the carnage and ruin, the wreckage-at his fellows in Bravo Company, And it was as if he saw the sheer, manifest ugliness—the blunt and pervasive, raw and stupefying ugliness-of Fire Base Harriette, as a place, for the first time. So without telling anyone of his heart attackstiff-necked and stoic about his still souring nausea-the medic gathered his soaking wet gear and turned in his time to the captain. The captain listened with great patience to the gulped whispers and spoke to him briefly, but did not argue, having looked into the medic's sickened face the whole time. (For the sake of the paperwork the medic was reassigned as the perimeter-bunker medic-the aid-station gofer.) When he shouldered his gear and walked to the chopper pad, the whole company stared at his back as they stood around wiping the rain out of their eyes, wringing out their shirts and socks, choking down sopping wet rations, and picking up for the inevitable morning move-out. The captain and the whole Larry
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company thought, There goes the company jinx, now maybe our luck will change.

The medic mounted the morning chopper come to collect the body bags and the several tub-sized thermoses as big as Coleman coolers ("mermight cans") from the evening meal before. He sat slumped and resolute on the strap bench next to the portside-door gunner with his rucksack and aid bag between his feet. and his rifle in his lap. The medic dismounted immediately when the chopper touched down at Phuc Luc, as if he had been catapulted, throwing his beat-to-hell rucksack over one shoulder and his aid bag over the other, like a bum's bundles. He walked off the smooth, oily tarmac of the chopper pad as though he had never seen that chopper before in his life. and turned north up the hill toward the battalion and company tents. He passed the basecamp headquarters buildings where the brigade busybodies and staff lifers lounged in the shade with vodka and tonics in one hand and long black cheroots in the other, watching the truck traffic. The medic passed the basecamp engineers with their water-purification truck and portable cement mixer, their concrete-block hooches and walk-in ice locker. where they stood around picking their teeth while overseeing a truckload of broken-down old women from the village filling sandbags. And the medic passed the spooky, deserted Alpha Company tents, now crawling with hordes of lawyers from the Judge Advocate's office, Red Cross do-gooders gathered from far and wide, and freelance newsmen (and that kind), scavenging, pulling a nice fast buck for Time and the Washington Post and the L.A. Times. (F.B. HARRIETTE WIPED OUT, EX-CLUSIVE PHOTOGRAPHS. SEC'TY VOWS MORE TROOPS,) They stood around in small groups and gawked, scribbling notes and names, pestering each other with questions and comments. They rummaged through footlockers and duffel bags and waterproof canvas bags, rifling through gear and belongings that weren't any of their business, sucking on unlit pipes. and shaking their heads at the pure pity of it.

And finally the medic turned briskly up the Bravo Company street. The company clerks typing their forms and the mess-tent cooks stirring their Kool-Aid and the housecat walking wounded with their games of paper-scissors-stone looked up, drawn to the sight of the medic like an apparition—"What on earth is the medic doing in camp," they said among themselves, "and where the hell is the rest of the company?" The medic turned sharply up the second path to the left among the company hooches and disappeared into his own open-air hooch. He draped his gear and aid

bag over the homemade headboard of his of peeled off his stinking jungle shirt, and we directly to the piss tube out back to relie himself. Exhausted and sickly pale he floppe headlong, boots and all, onto his cot, and a most instantly fell into a deep slumber. I woke in the late afternoon, nearly nightfal dripping with sweat, his face red and puff with sleep and his mouth cotton dry; the quile ed sleeping bag and poncho liner he used for a mattress well soaked.

By that time the word of his finding Pac and then quitting like that was all over came That night he sat in his hooch with his fee up, eating his C-rations, listening to the lou and sticky keys of the company clerk's Ur derwood manual typewriter-tack-tack, tack tack-tack-tack-the clerk writing home of tha Alpha Company guy and the medic, all th while peeking glances at the medic through the flimsy screen door. And for weeks and months afterward, until the medic rotated home in his proper turn, he stood on the am munition-box stoop of his hooch (the company jinx), leaning on an ordinary push broom in the drooping canvas doorway, and watched the rest of Bravo Company come and go to the field-each time more scroungy and grungy and hangdog-looking than the time before There were always fewer faces when they came humping those last three hundred meters up the hill from the base camp gate; always newer faces, pale and astonished, when they left again. But don't you know, a month or six weeks later when the company came back through the gate and up that hill those new guys would be indistinguishable from the rest. except for the eyes. But the eyes took longer.

ND TEN, TWELVE, FIFTEEN years later the medic will rock back and forth, night after night, in a chair near the wall of cases of bottled beer at the back of Coolidge's Bar and Grill, telling his stories. By the end of an evening (when it is good and dark) the medic will be good and drunk, but he can still crack those hard-boiled eggs and render the bleached shells neatly in two before he dips them in salt and dunks each bite in hot mustard. And he's not so drunk he can't still drink his beers and shots right down (until one year he will drink himself sick and die). Almost any night of the week he will sit there and brag that he could have made something of himself. "Would have been a goddamn good doctor, hear?" he will tell you in his thick alcoholic slur. "Except for this one guy, this geek," the guy not dead, but should have been.

HARPER'S AUGUST 1981

# Jarlboro Lights

The spirit of Mariboro in a low far eigarette.



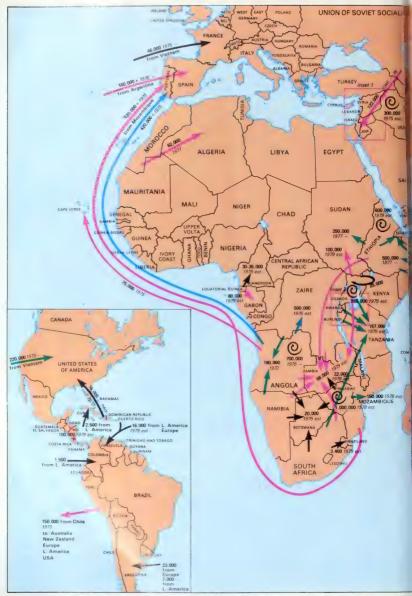


Also available in King Size Flip-Top box.

Varning: The Surgeon General Has Determined hat Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

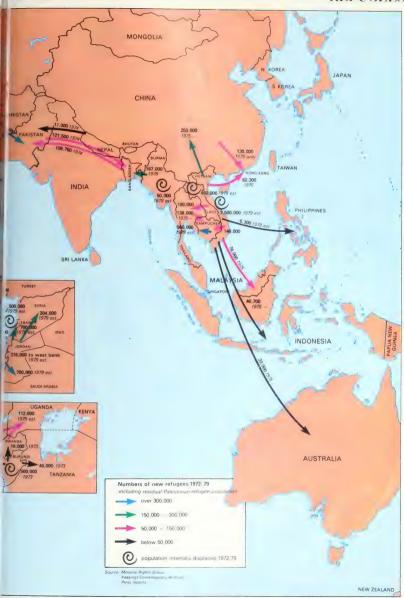
The fall of the second services of the second

### GEOGRAPHY 105



Geography 105 will offer a different view of the world each month. From The State of the World Atlas, by Michael K

### REFUGEES



onald Segal, published by Simon & Schuster. Maps copyright © 1981 by Pluto Press Limited.

### THE PUBLIC RECORD

MANHATTAN APPLIED IC.

165 Crash Street New York No. \_ctober 10. 1/7.

Mayor Ed Koch City Hall NYC 10007

Jove it when you say him as ; doing?" I think you're do no sabbline said to sor each of the five boroughs. This plan not only acknowledges that people its to see that the people its plan not only acknowledges that people its to so seemably but it shows a beaut and inventive approach to see that our manufacture approach to see the see that our manufacture approach to see that our manufacture approach to see that our

Sensing those qualities in you, I would like to substit another plan chart also takes the gensure of the people's deliver and extracted an untapped to the people's deliver and extracted an untapped to the people's deliver and people and the people of the

a district in his neighborhood.

Thus, I propose legalized prostitution on busses and trains. This plan would create a sobile red light edistrict. This plan would not be the more edistrict, and, as such sore, the plan would not allow neighborhood.

The sould recover the plan would not allow muser lines. This would encourage commuters to leave muser lines. This hose in favor of the prostitution project of the prostitution project of the project plan would not be prostituted and the project plan would not be prostituted and out of the project plan would not be project to the project plan would not possible the plan would not possible the project plan would not possible the project plan would not possible the project plan would not plan would not possible the project plan would not plan would not possible the project plan would not plan would no

At least that's the way I see it. What's your oninion:

Canal oun

Randy Cohen

MANHATTAN APPLIED heseas, \* Division INSTITUTE NEW YORK NEW YORK HOULD

August 2º, 1450

Mayor Ed Hoch New York, NY 10017

Lear mayor took.

I'd like to take this chance to voice my support
for your proposal to have wolves patrol the survay
storate yards of some off graffith writers. And
hand should

Mower, with all due respect, I'd like to surgest a slight improvement in sour orime-stopper idealine a slight improvement in sour orime-stopper idealine the level vary the animal assault year, thereby saint the their vary the animal assault year, thereby saint the their variety of the saint of the saint

what do you think " we've so all somes of animals stitume around the Bronz soo dules actions. In times of financial crisis it is inversal to the we all -- animal, vectorie, and sharper a all into in animal pout, what with all me police pitch in ani help out, what with all me police lay-offs.

will you be holding hearings so the like yorsers as an debate the choice of patrol and like you can be prossible for the MTA at this time?

Fa- 4 41 614.

Randy Comen

FS: Wow about an autographed picture



THE CITY OF NEW YORK OFFICE OF THE MAYOR NEW YORK, NY 10007

October 18, 1978

Ms. Randy Cohen 165 Crosby Street New York, N.Y. 10012

Dear Ms. Cohen:

I have your recent letter in which you suggest legalizing

Your plan to create a mobile red light district is, to say the least, original. However, the entire matter of legalizing prostitution is one which deserves serious regarizing prostitution is one which deserves serious consideration by government and most importantly by the people. Indeed, in a pluralistic society, all are entitled to different feelings on different subjects.

I do appreciate your taking the time to write.

All the best.



THE CITY OF NEW YORK OFF CE OF THE MATO NEW TORK N Y 000"

30,1-40 0 0 100

Mr Fard, Cuten Marriathy Applied Research L.Victor. 160 (1.85) Street New York, New York I. ..

Pess Vr. Coness

wolves in the sizway

Minkeys on the die

Are among the many things

that seem to interest you

Well, we're get other work to to

Down here ut City Hall

so much as we love to hear from you. .

S 1 12 % M-57%, the 12 811.

Sar eres.

Were In offer : 1 100 4 : 150 VV

### MANHATTAN APPLIED Bestatch Dis 165 Crodu Street New York New York Co. ?

August 21, 1cc

Ronald Reagan c/o Republican National Committee 310 ist St. S.E. washington, D.J. 20003

Dear Mr. Beagan:

The other sizh: I heard on the radio (a UE -- andr in: USA)
that you se "great flaws" in the theory of evolution!

Boy... I have been a second of the se

I look forward to hearing from you about this. By the way, I read that in France they call you "le comboy," well, I read that in Free pore buckarous to somey on down to say we can use talk a little home sense. As I right? Keep up the flaght, podner!

PS: How about an autographed picture? Could it be from a movie? Maybe one with Bonzo in it?

MANHATTAN APPLIED Research Division 165 Croshy Street, New York, New York 10012 Sept. 19. 1980

whald Bearan 3/0 Reagan/Eush Committee National Headquarters 901 S. Highland Arlington, VA 22204

understand that even though you were right there in the person of the pe I look forward to hearing from you.

Randy Cohen

PS: How about an autographed picture? One with you and Bonzo together would go a long way toward convincing me that you're a man who's toward convincing me that you're a man who's not ashamed of his past, and neither is Bonzo (even though he's dead).

Reagan Bush Committee Promigrate Efforts & Child or See: 27300 101-686-3400

September 2, 1980

Dear Friend

Toys interest to eventor season has been referred to me. The Governor has over more personally superain handred letters personally extended to the control of the control o

To your interest in his position on several key insure.

We have not a may request for the same basic information that our
office has completel requests for the same basic information that our
office has completel requests in the same basic information that our
labelings are supported in the same basic ba

Someon recognition of the figure will be the decade of someoner security is emarked that the 1980's will be the decade of Morellon I believe that that the left process of the figure of

Sunday September JRID. Is being called "Christians are citizens.700" Sunday. The purpose is to usery every plater to result is a people of the company of the control of th

her was you letter In took to a very worse and form of the and are said to the following of the said and form of the said to t amounted as in clear of the form of the first of the form of the first of the first of the form of the first of

Lawa Cabell

RONALD REAGAN

October 27, 1980

Mr. Randy Cohen Mr. Kandy Cohen Manhattan Applied Research Division 165 Crosby Street New York, NY 10012

Dear Mr. Cohen:

Thank you for your thoughtful letter. Let me assure you that Governor Reagan senses deeply for all males, especially Bonzo. He owns six dogs and four horses. Thank are very important to him. bonzo. He owns six dogs and to They are very important to him.

Again, thank you for writing.

Sincerely, forc & Jack Wells Staff Assistant

9841 AIRPORT ROULEVARD, SUTTE 1410, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90045 Paul for by Reggia Bush Committee United States Senator Paul Lassit, Charman Bay Buchanan Treasurer

# A GEOGRAPHER OF THE IMAGINATION

The astute eye of Guy Davenport

by Hugh Kenne

UY DAVENPORT is grateful for "having been taught how to find things": all that he has ever done, he's willing to hazard. He learned it during a whole childhood of looking in fields.

Every Sunday afternoon of my childhood, once the tediousness of Sunday school and the appalling boredom of church were over with, corrosions of the spirit easily salved by the roast beef, macroni pie, and peach cobbler that followed them, my father loaded us all into the Essex, later the Packard, and headed out to look for Indian arrows.

So commences a magical account.
The day I first read it, on pages
Hugh Kenner is the author of A Homemade
World and many other books.

copied from a magazine called Antaeus. I resolved that if it ever appeared in a book of Guy Davenport's nonfictional writings I would lose no time commending that book to the world. So this review was scheduled when The Geography of the Imagination\* was announced, and it was not to be aborted by the discovery, when the review copy arrived, that the name on the book's dedication page was my own. If having known a man for twenty-five years is to disqualify one from talking about his work, then our literary culture will have to be left to hermits.

The eye that found Indian arrowheads on Sunday afternoons in South Carolina is by now the most astute eye in America. What can it not \* North Point Press. \$20. able in a single picture so familia we have never learned to see it, Grar Wood's American Gothic. Here ar fifty-seven of those words: She is a product of the ages, this modest lowa farm wife: she has

find! 2.000 trimly ordered word

defile to bring news of what is fine

She is a product of the ages, this modest Iowa farm wife: she has the hair-do of a mediaeval madona, a Reformation collar, a Greek cameo, a nineteenth-century pinafore.

Martin Luther put her a step behind her husband; John Knox squared her shoulders; the stockmarket crash of 1929 put that look in her eyes.

Such prose is as packed with in formation as the picture, which con tains "trees, seven of them, as alon the porch of Solomon's temple," "



nboo sunscreen—out of China by y of Sears Roebuck—that rolls up a sail," and sash windows "Euean in origin, their glass panes m Venetian technology as perted by the English."

The farmer's eyeglasses even, ich Phidias would have thought niracle, are fetched from deeps history. "The first portrait of a son wearing specs is of Cardinal one de Provenza, in a fresco of 52 by Tommaso Barisino di Mo-1a," and "the center for lens grindfrom which eyeglasses diffused the rest of civilization was the ne part of Holland from which style of the painting itself dees." This is precisely relevant. ant Wood once thought he would a Post-Impressionist; discovering nis Netherlandish tradition of inting middle-class folk with honand precision" was what sent him ck to Iowa from Montparnasse. American history is a story of inging and of leaving behind: eful choices. What was brought s imprinted the New World with ange traces of prior origins. On old road through the Santa Ynez ountains in California, certain rock rfaces are scored with ruts spaced actly as were the wheels of Roan chariots. The stagecoaches that arked them were built to Spanish easurements, and the wheels of panish coaches had been spaced to the ruts of Roman roads in Spain. ich transfer of patterns is wholly itomatic; no one involved need now that it is happening. In a simer way, Grant Wood's vision, arned from Dutch and Flemish asters, came to register in Amer-

othes—paper pattern, bolt cloth, redle, thread, scissors [none of lese visible in the picture, but all nplied by it]—also brought her usband's bib overalls, which were riginally, in the 1870's, trainmen's orkclothes designed in Europe, lanufactured here by J. C. Penney, and disseminated across the United states as the railroads connected city with city."

a, in Vermeer's or Memling's way,

e mute pieties enshrined in things.

Thus "the train that brought her

Every glimpse in America includes

artifacts bearing such tales. Most of us, though, resemble most of the time certain people who used to tag along on the Davenport family's Sunday expeditions: people "who would not have noticed the splendidest of tomahawks if they had stepped on it, who could not tell a worked stone from a shard of flint or quartz."

Likewise there are people who draw pay for being art historians and do not think to inquire into the credentials of a pose that displays man and wife side by side. That too is Flemish-Rubens used it, van Eyck-and before that it was an Etruscan convention, and before that, Egyptian. Though in Iowa it alludes to the Brownie box camera, it also remembers something Wood need not have known-an Egyptian prince beside his wife, "strict with pious rectitude, poised in absolute dignity, mediators between heaven and earth, givers of grain, obedient to the gods." Prince Rahotep would be holding the flail of Osiris. Our man holds something Mediterranean, a pitchfork, descended from the trident of Poseidon.

So the theme the picture states -a tension between the growing and the ungrowing, wheat and iron-is the theme of Dis and Persephone: he the lord of metals with his iron scepter, she the corn-girl he has captured and adorned with a metal brooch. American Gothic, the title of which, by the way, does not sneer at rigid souls but denotes the architectural style of the farmhouse, is finally "a picture of a sheaf of golden grain, female and cyclical, perennial and the mother of civilization; and of metal shaped into scythe and hoe: nature and technology, earth and farmer, man and world, and their achievement together."

AS SO MUCH ever been found in what we tend to dismiss as a pointlessly elaborate caricature? And are these findings embarrassed by the information that Grant Wood was thinking not of husband and wife but of father and spinster daughter, prowling males held at bay with that

pitchfork? Can a picture know far more than its painter meant, or knew? Certainly, as he spreads out his trove of arrowheads for our inspection, Davenport is apt to incur the suspicion that time past did not deposit them in the fields where he gathered them, that they dropped there rather through holes in his own pockets. Is it perhaps the knowingness of a Kentucky professor that Davenport generously attributes to Grant Wood? We have extraordinary difficulty believing that poets or painters really know very much. This implies that the only way to signal the possession of knowledge is to deliver a lecture.

In Poe's "To Helen" we encounter a "perfumed sea," and have two options. We can dismiss "perfumed" as a typical bit of adjectival silliness. Or we can remember, with Davenport, "that classical ships never left sight of land, and could smell orchards on shore," moreover "that perfumed oil was an extensive industry in classical times and that ships laden with it would smell better than your shipload of sheep." And as for the pertinence of classical times, "those Nicaean barks of yore" in Poe's verse get their adiective from "the city of Nice, where a major shipworks was: Mark Antony's fleet was built there."

Yes, ves, but did Poe really know all that? He knew enough, certainly, to make the ships "Nicaean" and to mean something by it. Beyond that nothing is provable, unless someone can show us a letter of Poe's remarking on the odors that wafted to Mediterranean ships from Provencal orchards. The skill of locating such documents and the strategy of citing them make up what is called scholarship. When the document is lacking, literary explication can appeal only to plausibility. Poe wrote "To Helen" when he was still a boy, and we don't know at all what lore floated through schoolrooms then. Davenport's Poe can scarcely be read by Americans, who have systematically forgotten everything he thought they knew.

Whitman likewise. "Things vivid to him and his readers, such as Transcendentalism, the philosophy of Fourier and Owen, the discovery of dinosaurs in the west by Cope and Marsh, phrenology, photography, telegraphy, railroads, have fused into a blur," rendering a great deal of his poetry meaningless. For this state of things the only remedy is information, "Outlines for a Tomb (G. P., Buried 1870)" is retrieved from blather by a note on the millionaire philanthropist George Peabody, who left a museum to Harvard and a museum to Yale and is nowhere mentioned in the Britannica.

It helps also to be reminded that "Of the delights celebrated in 'A Song of Joys,' most are accessible now only to the very rich, some are obsolete, some are so exploited by commerce as to be no longer joys for anybody except the stockbroker. two are against the law (swimming naked, sleeping with 'grown and part-grown boys'), and one is lethal ('the solitary walk')." Also that "the largest American business is the automobile, the mechanical cockroach that has eaten our cities: that and armaments."

That Whitman would have shared Davenport's present distaste for the auto is something we're left to divine, forgetting as we do so those magical autos now obsolete as the dinosaur-"the Essex, later the Packard"-that facilitated the expeditions after Indian arrowheads. There's no getting around the way Davenport's poets and painters, as we get to know them, come to resemble Guy Davenport: a special case, no doubt, of something he draws our attention to, "Ernst Mach's disturbing and fruitful analysis of science as a psychological history of scientists.... The theory of relativity is in the genius of its conception and in the style of its expression as much a projection of the uniquely individuated mind of Einstein as Jerusalem is of Blake's," If that's true of science, and it probably is, then a century's effort to deliver the study of literature from mere accidents of personality by rendering it "scientific" lies inert now, dissolving in ironies. Around its corroding wreck Post-Structuralism, Interpretation's current craze, dances a rite of barbaric despair.

'VE JUST opened a package of books that include Barbara Johnson's The Critical Difference\* ("How does a text mean?" asks the blurb: "How can the same text trigger a history of militantly incompatible interpretations?"), Geoffrey Hartman's Saving the Text\*\* (subtitled Literature | Derrida | Philosophy), Robert Young's anthology Untying the Text\*\*\* (subtitle: "A Post-Structuralist Reader"), and can recommend none of them for a Sunday afternoon. These are nine-tofive books, for the days when you're very alert. Young cites Roland Barthes: "Reading is a form of work." Certainly, reading Post-Structuralist prose is a form of work, like jogging with a nail in your shoe. It enjoins us to remember that there is no nontheoretical criticism, only a kind that doesn't confront its own theories and is free to suppose them "natural" and theory-free. That's for blithe spirits only, naïve ones,

Bearing theory in mind, though -what really goes on, as we seek to release some meaning from strings of words?-can induce the kind of paralysis that overtook the centipede when he tried to give thought to which foot moved after which. How to write readable Post-Structuralist critical prose is a problem so far unsolved, though Barbara Johnson has moments when something almost moves. For if there are no arrowheads in the field, only ways of persuading yourself that you know they're not there but also know how to mimic the motions of seeming to seek them, then in making it clear that you know your motions are a mimicry, yielding only a highly significant absence of arrowheads, if you follow me, then you either write very long sentences indeed or abridge them with the aid of technical terms that the unkind are apt to call jargon. You also find yourself detained by similarities among your own words (this is in part because classic Structuralism, which we're now beyond, discerned meaning only in differences), and games with "text" and "pretext" and "pre-text" signal your awareness that reading though work, is after all a game.

You'll forgive me if I don't illi trate: it's unkind to quote even is gon out of context, though I' tempted by Paul de Man's whim that makes Archie Bunker an arc debunker (of the Greek arche, "origin"), whose impatient "What the difference?" doesn't ask for difference but says, "I don't give damn what the difference is." The "the literal meaning asks for the concept (difference) whose existent is denied by the figurative mean ing," and Archie is Deconstruction tionist malgré lui, as vou'll grant you know what a pother Jacque Derrida, the arch-Deconstructionis makes with "difference" and his ow coinage, "differance."

T'S PLEASANTER to linger wit Davenport, a sweet mind and fructive. Certainly he can't b convicted of not having a theory though it is not a theory of readin but a theory of history. It is ver likely untrue, but it got his bool written. It says, I was happier at te than I am at fifty-four, and a lik pattern is discernible in America As the fields where we sought thos arrowheads are now under an im mense lake, so oblivion has engulfed American consciousness, and artist vainly array particulars hardly any one can command the knack to read Hence these pages, in which I take pleasure in my own bright arrays culled in homage from Poe and Pound and Grant Wood and Whit man and Joyce and Zukofsky and Eudora Welty and as many othe sly but masterful spirits as I've had occasion to pay attention to.

It may very well be the import o our age, that literature is not the text, does not contain its meanings is merely what happens in some mine in the presence of a text. If so, then the choice of another mind to spend time with is crucial to your well being. The mind that conceived Th Geography of the Imagination, and executed its elegant meaty sentences is one I'll commend.

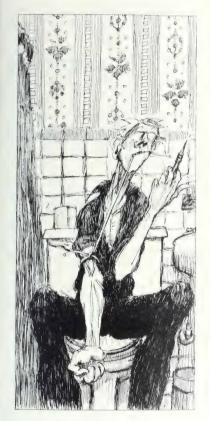
HARPER'S/AUGUST 198

<sup>\*</sup> Johns Hopkins University Press, \$12. \*\* Johns Hopkins University Press, \$12.95. \*\*\* Routledge & Kegan Paul, \$19.95.

### LN OUR TIME

by Tom Wolfe

### The Evolution of the Species





No. 4: The Dope Fiend

1951

"For God's sake, Robbie, you gotta come outta there! The baby's broken her leg and we gotta getta to the hospital!"
"Urrnnnh...be right there."

1981

"For God's sake, Mr. Robinson, you can't keep them waiting any longer!
They're getting ready to leave! We'll lose the contract!"

"Urrnnnh . . . be right there."

### WARNING THE DEER

### by Gerry Stork

Three weeks that include Thanksgiving the hunters excuse themselves from reality and rationalize they are managing some of the deer that would starve in the cold for lack of browse. I'd sooner starve any day than be annihilated by a slug disintegrating my insides, metal fist from a black steel barrel, sighted in by a scope on my privacy, murdered by some individual working out what seems part of that original sin the Bible speaks about when Adam and Eve got separated from all the animals they loved.

Imagine being a deer: the winter is hard-aren't they always? all day we browse in the zone of starvation ambling quietly toward death uncomfortably getting numb when you see us we look content our pellets of waste diappear as stomachs shrink in the black and white of snow and winter trees in this northern existence we love our spirits variations of ancestors men drew on cave walls in Eurasia when time beganthere is nothing like lying down cold and slowly draining self into a burial mound of fur and frozen flesh within hearing of luscious spring to become part of a carrion crow, a touch of lynx but mostly forest or:

already it is time again to hightail it I heard the faint reports this morning even before the sun took the light from the stars. There is the one sickly stench in my memory

so revolting I turn
both toward and away from it
at this time every year
for all of a sudden it is
everywhere
and I listen for twigs breaking
like miniature explosions
heralding the arrival of my destroyer
in red woolens.
There! Again! Even as I
take off I am turned
excruciatingly inside out anus to throat
shredded spleen and intestines
burst open by expanding
metal—my deerness.

On my way to work this first Monday of hunting season, I stop at a store and as I am leaving after exchanging pleasantries with the storekeeper, she asks if I've gotten my deer. I say I've yet to go out, been busy making a living closing the shell of a house in for winter. As I drive away I am ashamed I didn't tell her the whole truth. I'm not a hunter in this county of hunters. I've been out warning the deer; up on the rafters with my hammer warning the deer. Bang bang bang bang. One two three four. Get going!

Now pounding nails again into the house frame, I hope my echoes of warning across the valleys and hills of Danville are understood. Bucks move the does and the fawns into the bogs and into the marshes and up the mountains away from the atavistic menace come hunting them here. Let those people sight in their rifles eternally, get the shakes drilling cans off fences, and wonder how this year all the deer have disappeared.

# THE NEW IRRELEVANCE

ecialists in the noncontroversial

by Mark Lilla

N A SMALL hill in the campus of my alma mater stands a striking old building that used to house the School Homeopathic Medicine, Homeohy, a bizarre branch of medical sience" based on treating patients h drugs that aggravate the sympns they already have, was taught 1 practiced there from 1875 until 22, long after it was clear to all it the doctors were quacks. But, ce universities never fire anyone, matter how out of date they beme, the faculty were transferred the regular medical school, where ev continued to practice and frightcoeds well into the Thirties.

That building has always reminded that whatever else they are, and latever other high purposes they ve, colleges and universities are o museums, monuments to our st intellectual fashions. They are t ordinary museums, in which the st of the past is preserved through e works of long-dead masters; they e more like Williamsburg and all ose other "living museums," where u can go and see underpaid highhool students blowing glass or bakg bread or sitting behind ropes eaving in the "authentic" colonial ome. This is indeed a peculiar way treat the academically out of date, pecially since intellectual fashions in change almost as rapidly as langes in dress. The difference toay between an old pair of suede oots and a professor is that the ormer is given to Goodwill when it as served its purpose; the latter is iven tenure.

Tenure preserves academic freelark Lilla is managing editor of The Public sterest.

dom, I suppose, but it also perpetuates teaching and inquiry-worse, academic inquiry-into subjects that have long come to bore students and the general public. The passionate young graduate student becomes interested in what he believes to be a "hot" academic and political subject, does exhaustive research, and gets tenure somewhere on the basis of the obligatory dissertation, which turns into the obligatory "first book." Suddenly the political winds shift, his colleagues rush like lemmings in new directions, and he finds himself out in the cold, a specialist in the noncontroversial.

The young professor then faces an awfully hard choice: either he can give up on his worn-out subject and embark on a new and interesting course of study, or he can remain where he is and try to convince himself and his students that what he does is crucial to the life of the mind or the health of the Republic, or both. A few do strike out on new paths, but most are no braver than you or me; they stick with what they know and console themselves with the thought that they have remained loval to their calling while their colleagues have gone whoring after trendier topics. With university and government support, self-insulated cottage industries soon spring up as the professors in these academic ghettoes read one another's books and assign them to helpless undergraduates or the stray graduate student they have managed to acquire. No one is particularly passionate about a subject now grown tedious and pedantic. This process gives us the First Iron Law of Academia: relevance breeds irrelevance.

F I AM to judge by the four recent books I have before me, the study of equality has now acquired the status of a proper academic cottage industry. American professors first turned their full attention to equality, in all its formulations, during the late 1960s. This interest was surely politically in-spired, but by and large the early writings were interesting and some were even important. Economists and sociologists studied changes in the distribution of income and the effects of schooling and background on earnings, and their work received a good deal of popular attention. (When Christopher Jencks's Inequality was published in 1972, the author was immediately displayed on the "Today" show, where he declared that success in America had little to do with aptitude and everything to do with "luck.") Professors of government reconsidered the tradition of political thought in light of the "new equality" and academic philosophers turned their attention to political matters, after a decades-long hiatus, upon the publication of John Rawls's A Theory of Justice in 1971. So by 1972 the best academic arguments for egalitarianism had already been made, and intellectual magazines like Commentary were filled with proper rebuttals. With the presidential nomination of George McGovern, equality seemed the very epicenter of political and intellectual debate.

McGovern lost and the fashions soon changed, but the new equality industry was just gearing up. And it had plenty of momentum: research centers had been founded, journals established, books planned, and grant applications filed. Most important,

perhaps, graduate students had gone to work on the subject. American universities produced more graduate students between 1965 and 1975 than they had since the turn of the century, and for a good number of these young Ph.D.'s, equality was the only trade they knew. They shared the radical impulse of their teachers, but to prove their worth and "original contribution to scholarship" these young men and women would have to go beyond the straightforward political arguments of their teachers and become far more academic. So for the past five years or so, two different kinds of books have been written and rewritten, the first being a political restatement of the old case for egalitarianism, the second being a more academic "theoretical formulation" by younger scholars trying to establish themselves.

ICHAEL REICH'S Racial Inequality: A Political-Economic Analysis\* is a splendid example of the second sort of book and shows just how far social scientists have taken the word "equality" from its everyday political meaning. Mr. Reich is a young economist, and a Marxist one at that, In the introduction he says he will show that "the theoretical, econometric, and historical discussions [in the book] each lend support to the contention that class conflict plays an important role in . . . a capitalist economy and that the economic basis exists for the creation of a broad interracial class alliance opposing racism in all of its forms." Strong claims, and Marxist economists these days are ready to back them up with enough statistical artillery to make even their bourgeois colleagues blanch. Here is one shell:

The direct and indirect effects of racial inequality on white inequality can be decomposed quantitatively by use of the following relation:

 $r_{Gw,B/\Psi} = b_{Gw,B/\Psi} + b_{Gw,u} + \sum_{i,b} r_{i,b} + \sum_{Gw,i} r_{B/\Psi},$ where:  $r_{kj} = simple \ correlation$ coefficients

gression coefficients
(beta weights)

u = subscript for unionism

i = runs over control

Social scientists like Mr. Reich show how political relevance and academic relevance can part ways. Ask any ordinary person whether he thinks there is enough economic equality in this country and, whatever his answer, he will no doubt talk about equality in a rather simple way: he thinks there should be some connection between work and reward: he thinks that his children and grandchildren should be better off than he is; and he thinks the poor and infirm should get some basic assistance. And his answer will probably depend on his own experience,

Ask a social scientist the same question and you will be met with a barrage of data, "operational definitions," regression equations, Gini coefficients, correlations, graphs, and printouts. This concern with methodology is a virtue in academic scientific inquiry because it keeps professors honest about their evidence and makes them think through the logic of their arguments, but it is a political vice in that it separates ordinary people, who rely on personal impressions and anecdotes, from the guy who runs the IBM. Books on equality that require graduate-level statistics, especially those by Marxists, should be at the very least ironic. This one isn't, nor are the hundreds of others like it. This gives us the Second Iron Law of Academia: if you need to ask a social scientist the answer to an important political question, you're asking the wrong question.

Amy Gutmann's Liberal Equality\* presents a different sort of problem because she is clearly a sharp student of political philosophy who must turn her dissertation into one of those dreary "first books." She introduces her work with the obligatory reference to her personal political passions—"My interest in equality began in a common way: with an

intuitive feeling of uneasiness of the extreme poverty and wealth the United States and Great Brita —but by the end of the first pages it is clear that her book be merely another scholarly exerc not a source of political inspirat

The argument she puts forward that liberty and equality, proper conceived, are complementary rat than contradictory political ide Though this is not a particularly r idea, at least not since de Toco ville, Ms. Gutmann wishes to put ward a respectable case for a cert degree of economic equality as base any society needs before it of extend liberties. A clever essay two would have made the point su ciently (a form her mentor Mich Walzer has mastered) and she see up to the task. But rather than ma her argument straight out, Ms. G mann is caught between two acaden poles: that of the intellectual ltorian and that of the analytic p losopher. When she is writing htory, unfortunately, her prose realike a collection of notecards for course on the history of politic philosophy. (This is no doubt t

result of dissertation research.) The philosophical arguments then selves are of the usual form in the modern academy. There are conti-ual references to "truth sentences "Rawls's difference principle," "ne essary and sufficient conditions," ar "the Marxist critique." All this ha found a place in philosophy depar ments (it must have, since the boo was reviewed seriously in the Time Literary Supplement), but it sure deadens all the life there still is i the great tradition of liberal though These books are depressing and mak me wonder how many other activ political minds are being burie under a mountain of footnotes. Thi book has 58 pages of them,

have been busy acade mizing equality, ther still are a few olde (and tenured) professors who writ about these political matters in language more appropriate to the subject. Michael Walzer's Radical Prin

b<sub>kj</sub> = standardized re\* Princeton University Press, \$22.50.

<sup>\*</sup> Cambridge University Press, \$34.95.

les, a collection of his essays pubjed by Basic Books last year, is best example, but even his pieces equality date back to the early venties and his more recent writranges over wider terrain, reveala subtle and rather ambivalent nd. Professors without Walzer's ts could and should turn their attion to matters other than equal-, but it seems there is still a marfor two types of very tired books: dreamy utopian one about the ssibility of a "truly equal, truly it society," and the defensive ponic. William Ryan's Equality is of : first sort, and Philip Green's The rsuit of Inequality is of the ond. \*

Dr. Ryan, a professor of psycholy who wrote Blaming the Victim few years back, believes America's thinking about poverty and uality is all mixed up. He doesn't iderstand why Americans keep being that social programs should ovide a safety net (what the auor calls a "Fair Play" ideology) ther than a fadical redistribution

wealth (the preferred "Fair rares" ideology). Don't we realize, asks quite seriously, that "the atibution of convoluted complexity the issue of poverty is essentially process of mystification and that are many approaches to poverty and orial problems can be better under-ood through ideological analysis"? hat "poverty is in reality only an spect of the overall problem of inquality"? That "the 'ruling ideas' te ripe for dethronement"?

Dr. Ryan is a marvelous museum iece. He believes we can have free us service for all and that radical ocialism is possible in the United tates. But when he talks about the ealing powers of "ideology," Dr. tyan sounds more than a little like Verner Erhard telling us with a traight face that world hunger can be ended if only we believe and commit ourselves by giving him twentyive dollars. What a bargain to be able to commit ourselves to equality or only \$14.95.

Mr. Green's book is a disappointment because although he serves on the editorial board of the *Nation*, he

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<sup>\*</sup> Both Pantheon, both \$14.95.

is a decent writer and he has shown himself to be a cagey debater on such matters as sociobiology, affirmative action, I.Q. testing, political theory, and feminism. Had he merely collected and published his essays on these subjects it would have made an interesting little book. Instead, he has lost his temper and decided to collapse these separate points into one Big Argument about inequality and the intellectual conspiracy to preserve it.

Mr. Green smells a rat. Back in the 1960s. "it would not have been necessary to write a book such as this one" because a "cooperative, humane society of equals" did not seem utopian and everyone realized that "the ethos of capitalism is systematized inequality." That few believe that anymore the author blames on the machinations of the "new inegalitarians," a movement made up of an odd assortment of sociobiologists (E. O. Wilson), neo-conservative critics of affirmative action (Nathan Glazer), psychologists defending intelligence tests (Arthur Jensen), libertarian philosophers

(Robert Nozick), and defenders of patriarchy (George Gilder). He scores some easy points attacking a few extremists, but he is so intent on showing that there is some sort of unity to this group that he ends up badly distorting and misrepresenting the careful and thoughtful arguments of his opponents, turning them into caricatures. The author has clearly lost his patience and humor about the past ten years of American politics, and a potentially good book turns into another whining and pouty tract. You can always tell an egalitarian has lost his temper when he criticizes, as Mr. Green does, "simple, man-in-the-street prejudice "

to the academy in the late Sixties, both as a legitimate goal of the curriculum and as a defense for certain types of inquiry, worried our most thoughtful professors, who wished to preserve traditional subjects and good taste, and who wanted to keep politics as far from scholarship as possible. In

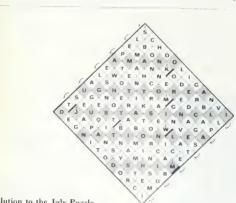
the introduction to Beyond Culti Lionel Trilling ruminated on the ture of the academy as it came embrace the "adversary cultur and remembered that

three or jour decades ago the university figured as the citadel of conservatism, even of reaction. It was known that behind what used to be called its walls and in its ivory towers reality was alternately ignored and traduced. The young man who committed himself to an academic career was understood to have announced his premature surrender.

I wonder how Trilling would ha reacted to the new irrelevance the books represent, the bureaucratiz adversary culture. It was hoped some, and feared by others, the changes in the college curriculu and scholarly endeavors over the patwenty years would keep the acaden perpetually au courant at the expen of teaching and study in more tractional fields, but the political profesoriat is neither up-to-date nor tractional. It is just another exhibit the museum.

And what about the students? was hoped, and also feared, that the "adversary culture" of professor would produce generation after ger eration of young radical students un trained in the classics but possesse of a "political consciousness" hereto fore thought unimaginable in th university. If you walk into an aven age classroom today, you may no hear much about Plutarch, bu neither will you find students read for political agitation. Instead, you will find a professor dressed in beat up corduroys, a flannel shirt, and work boots, standing before a clasof straight-backed students dressed in designer jeans and pressed shirts The professor will deliver some schol arly-sounding harangue about bour geois values, the redistribution o wealth, and the depredations of the multinationals, only to have the students, whose minds are probably on getting into business or law school, ask if all this political stuff will be on the exam. The professor is frustrated, the students are bored. And Plutarch goes unread.

HARPER'S/AUGUST 1981



Solution to the July Puzzle Notes for "Biased Opinion"

The quotation from Samuel Johnson: "A man ought to read just as inclination leads him." a. redo (do, re); b. (s)an(g.Se)vil(le); c. s(ch) ool; d.  $\Gamma$ ll-bred (bread); e. hooligan, go-in-a-hol(e), anagram; f. k-nob; g. g-an-g; h. pa(Ga.)n; i. redcap, pac(d) er, reversal; j. no(blema)n; k. m-Anne-red; l. champ (two meanings); m. mocha, anagram; n. vestal, anagram; o. Pa.-tent; p. in-vest; q. entra (anagram) in; r. N-ice; s. t(on) ic; t. s(kit) ow; u. (we) skit; v. wels(reversal)-her; w. Sheraton, hidden: x. gest (jest); y. tonga, anagram; z. Mac-ro (reversal) ; a.a. Ba(to)n; bb. g(Au) ges; cc. acro (B.A.)t; dd. (be)-quest; ee. b( $\Gamma$ m-in)+; ff. Bushman, pun; g= min(l-b.) us; hh. antiques, anagram; in pans (reversal)-y.; jj. do (tin) g; kk. ja(il)-pans; ll. ti(N.G.) ed; mm. microdot, Tomor-Dic(k), anagram; nn. systemic, anagram.

### THE MIND'S EYE

by David Suter

### A NORTH/SOUTH DIALOGUE



How do you tell your authoritarian regime from my totalitarian regime?

See if they click their heels?

# SAKI'S WORLD

Killer elks and tyrannical aunts

by Frances Taliafer

Saki: A Life of Hector Hugh Munro, by A. J. Langguth. 288 pages. Simon & Schuster, \$14.95.

AKI IS NOT a ponderous writer. You could read his whole oeuvre in a long weekend, a measure of time that suits this Edwardian fantast of house parties, lawn-tennis engagements, and afternoon teas. (You would have to save his history, The Rise of the Russian Empire, for another time, but then he wrote it under his earlier name, H. H. Munro.)

Saki produced a book of political satire, two brief novels, several plays, and five volumes of short stories. The Westminster Alice, his satirical version of Lewis Carroll, is a curious ephemeron. The plays, one of the novels, and perhaps two thirds of the short stories may be dispensed with. They read like the work of a callow Wilde or an Anglo-American O. Henry: you would be pleased to find them on the bookshelf of your rented summer house, but they will not sustain you in the soul's winters.

Nor will the best of the short stories or the elegant first novel, The Unbearable Bassington. One thinks of Virginia Woolf's comment on George Gissing: "Where the great novelist flows in and out of his characters and bathes them in an element which seems to be common to us all, Gissing remains solitary, self-centred, apart." So does Saki. He is the narcissist at large, the poet of Frances Taliaferro writes the "In Print" column in monthly alternation with Jeffrey Burke.

drawing-room cruelty. If anyone ever shed a tear over one of Saki's stories, it was caused not by compassion but by chaggin

Perhaps it is this distinction that separates the great novelist from the mere "novelist of manners," and perhaps Saki is only a miniaturist of manners, after all. The invention is multifarious, but the sensibility is narrow. In story after story, amusement and cruelty join; they appear in the form of verbal barbs, elaborate practical jokes, exquisite blackmail, and retributions that range from simple comeuppance to feral vengeance. Saki's world—no, his parish—is peopled by tyrannical aunts, lustrous youths, enfants ter-



ribles, club bores (he calls the "starling-voiced dullards"), fatue politicians, and competitive he esses. Even his most likable chacters at their most admirable a no more than "good sorts" or "arable worldlings."

We cannot, then, look to Saki f the consolations of high art. lacrimae rerum here, no balm Gilead. What we can find is t ruthless inspection of society in the concentrated light of an intelligen without loyalties. The venue is E wardian, but Saki is a modern writ because his subjects are iconoclas and disintegration. In 1919, aft his death, an appreciation in tl Spectator praised his "great gif -wit, mordant irony and a remar able command of ludicrous met phor," but suggested that the ord nary reader was disconcerted 1 Saki's "intermittent vein of freakis inhumanity." I believe it is the quality that makes Saki-for goo or ill-our contemporary.

O READERS of Saki, A. .
Langguth's biography introduces Hector Hugh Munro
He was born in 1870 i
Burma, where his father was an o
ficer in the British military police
Left motherless at a very early ago
Hector and two older siblings greup in Devon in the care of their twaunts.

Trial by aunt has not been ade quately celebrated as one of th forces that shaped the British Em pire. With imperial fortitude th "...closely read by many in the upper circles of government. iournalism and the academic world."

-The Washington Post

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"... noticed where it matters. It is must reading at the White House, on Capitol Hill and elsewhere in the government."

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stern Munro ladies governed their nephews and niece, whom they seem to have regarded as a lesser breed without the law. Their rule was one of intimidation and denial

Colonel Munro, retiring early, returned to England to take charge of his teenage children. Travels on the Continent, especially in Switzerland. acquainted Hector with that worldly institution he would later epitomize under the name of "the Grand Sybaris Hotel," But holidays in Dayos could not last forever. Hector went, like his father, to join the military police in Burma and found some amusement in his ceremonial duties. but persistent ill health sent him back to England, London life agreed with this impeccable bachelor, whom a friend compared to a young and humorous bird. In 1900, after several pleasant seasons in the Reading Room of the British Museum, Hector published The Rise of the Russian Empire. The notices were mixed.

Langguth finds that "the entire book echoes with the frustration of an adventurer's soul locked in the body of a clerk." These echoes would resound throughout Hector's later work, as in the character of Tom Keriway, a once glamorous wanderer who briefly appears in The Unbearable Bassington.

Keriway's "roving career" has made him as familiar with exotic lands and people as tamer souls are with Paris, "There was an air about him that a German diplomat once summed up in a phrase: 'a man that wolves have sniffed at." More than a whiff of envy perfumes that

portrait. As a foreign correspondent for the Morning Post-in the Balkans, in St. Petersburg, Warsaw, and the tamer Paris-Hector found many opportunities to sniff at wolves. He went to Belgrade to cover a regicide and in St. Petersburg he observed the 1905 revolution, yet it is difficult to think of him as a political reporter: his dispatches were too novelistic. He flirted with the romantic vision of a warrior self-"cruel, but brave, steadfast and enduring"; his actual adventures, sub rosa, were homoerotic. Of these we know almost nothing, thanks to the housekeeping zeal of his sister Ethel.

Hector returned to London in 1909. It was almost the end of the Edwardian decade proper, but the belle époque of blessed memory had a few more years to run. Under his pen name. Saki (it comes, equivocally, from the Rubáivát), Hector produced in a few years the fiction that so sharply limns his little world. The first member of his "small stock company" of regular characters was the ephebe Reginald, troop leader of Saki's sleek "boys." More youths followed, along with aunts, duchesses, and belligerent children, not to mention the "beasts and superbeasts" who embodied his interest in the preternatural.

One wonders what would have become of Hector in the postwar world. He did not live to see it: at fortythree he enlisted in the 2nd King Edward's Horse, later changing to the Royal Fusiliers. The romance of the army satisfied both his warrior fantasy and his boyish impulses. To his publisher he proudly signed himself "Trooper H. H. Munro," To Ethel, he wrote from his barracks in England: "We have a good deal of fun, with skirmishing raids at night with neighboring huts, and friendly games of footer; it is like being boy and man at the same time." Reluctant to become an officer, Hector assumed humble duties with punctilious pride, enjoyed his unaccustomed physical fitness, and was eventually promoted to lance sergeant. He died in the trenches at Betrancourt in November 1916, shot by a German sniper. His last words were "Put that bloody cigarette out."

HESE WERE peculiarly inelegant last words for a man whose ordinary prose sounded as if his most urgent business were to decide the color of his waistcoat. Consider these vintage samples:

Lucas was an over-well nourished individual ... with a colouring that would have been accepted as a sign of intensive culture in an asparagus, but probably meant in this case mere abstention from exercise.

She wore some excellently see rubies with that indefinable air of having more at home that is so difficult to improvise.

This is the Reginald side of Sai Reginald's spirit animates many other characters, both male and fema Reginald himself "has rather n evelashes and thinks it useless conceal the fact." He may love them in terrible weariness or h them to emphasize his point: the point will be quick, decisive, social correct, and very likely outrageout My favorite Reginaldism: "Peor may say what they like about the decay of Christianity; the religion system that produced green Chatreuse can never really die."

Saki is not very fond of wome and much of his amusement is take at their expense. In the embattle drawing rooms of Belgravia, s Mrs. Packletide take aim at h rival Loona Bimberton, Loona is or up on all the other hostesses becau she has recently been carried eleve miles in an airplane by an Algeria aviator. Mrs. Packletide, hungry for an even greater celebrity, goes off India to shoot a tiger. Alas, the tige is so decrepit that he dies of heat failure, and Mrs. Packletide mu pay dearly for the silence of he

hunting companion.

The only sympathetic females i Saki are epicene. Children are a ways acceptable: Saki's demonic li tle girls are interchangeable with hi demonic little boys, especially whe the issue is retribution. (In one of his most characteristic stories, "Th Lumber Room," a hypocritical, at thoritarian aunt is imprisoned in rainwater tank, whence, after muc argument, her Jesuitical little nepher will not rescue her.) Saki also re spects those adolescent and adu females who are capable of subver sion. Lady Carlotta wreaks fine have oc on an haut-bourgeois househol by impersonating their expecte new governess and inventing "Th Schartz-Metterklume Method," which requires the children to act out suc historical events as the rape of th Sabines. More often than not, Saki victims are women, but the perpe trators of these little triumphs shar an intelligent ruthlessness that ha regard for gender.

Some of Saki's "super-beasts" are th threatening and entertaining. the context one smiles (albeit ryously) at the news that a comtive German governess has been led by an elk "in a fit of excepnal moroseness." When the cat bermory is taught human speech one of the guests at a house party, effect on the entire group is elecfying. Tobermory, in his prowls, s overheard all their social secrets: fiction of "polite society" evapates when the ironic beast tells all. it in other "super-beasts" there is amusement, only pure menace. ki's greatest story is, I think, redni Vashtar." With the aid of pet ferret, young Conradin takes imal and conclusive vengeance on aunt who has made his life hell-1. One feels with Conradin the sperate rage of a trapped soul; re the triumph and the ruthlessss are very great.

Saki's first novel. The Unbearable ussington, plays on the tension been organized society and self-structive anarchy. Francesca Basagton, "if pressed in an unguarded oment to describe her soul, would obably have described her drawgroom." Society occupies her but been not make her happy; she will insecure until she has married offer son Comus to an heiress. Comus, e unbearable one of the title, of ourse responds with cavalier self-botage. Ruin awaits both; society ill close to them like the trapdoor

There is sadness in the elegance this brief novel. Mammon is a ckle god, but he reliably visits the ns of the gossips on their luncheon artners, and the punishment is blivion. Such epigrams!—such empness. The Unbearable Bassington is tarked by a longing for intimacy, nd Saki for all his brilliance seems

ever to have achieved that state.

f an oubliette.

J. LANGGUTH'S biography makes an agreeable introduction to Saki. The problems of writing about Hector Munro's life were greatly comounded by his sister's zealous

protection of his memory; the biographer must therefore rely on inference.

Langguth proceeds with fair discretion and good sense. For the reader unacquainted with Saki, this appreciative biography is almost an anthology of the best lines, the most characteristic plots and personages. Langguth provides very little literary criticism, however. Liberally he draws on Saki's works as a great trove of evidence for his life, but someone else must eventually do Saki full critical justice. He was, after all, the contemporary of Proust, with whom he had more than one taste in common. Readers in this decade are more likely to respond to his kinship with Waugh; they are the great-uncles of black humor.

HARPER'S/AUGUST 1981

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# MR.COMMON SENSE

The American Trotsky

by Michael Fd

His pen continued an overmatch for the whole brood....

—Richard Carlile.

imprisoned in 1823 for selling Paine's Rights of Man.

died in New York on June 8, in the year 1809, no one took much notice. A Quaker watchmaker, an old Frenchwoman alleged (falsely, as far as we know) to be Paine's mistress, her two little boys, and two Negro pallbearers were the only people at the graveside. Next day the leading New York newspaper supplied an epitaph: "Paine had lived long [he was seventy-two], done some good, and much harm."

Few of his legion of enemies spoke in so temperate a tone. Since his return to America in 1802 he had been denounced from the pulpits as the most wanton of blasphemers. Shortly after his death a full-length biography appeared in which accusations of drunkenness, lechery, and dirtiness in all his personal habits were added to the charge sheet.

He had no country in the world, and it may truly be said that he had not a friend. Was ever man so wretched? Was ever enormous sinner so justly punished?

Three years before his death he was stopped at the polling booth when he went to cast his vote; the men in power chose to deny his claim to be a citizen of the republic—he who had first dared to use the words "the

Michael Foot is the Leader of the British Labor party. This article is taken from his latest book, Debts of Honour, to be published in September by Harper & Row. Copyright © 1981 by Michael Foot. United States of America." So he died in contempt, poverty, and

It has taken generations to wipe away the mud. For years, on both sides of the Atlantic, publishers went to prison for attempting to reprint his books. By some inscrutable Stalinite censorship, whole histories of the American Revolution were written without mentioning the American Trotsky. A century after his death Theodore Roosevelt could still dismiss him as a "filthy little atheist." Even now he is sometimes written off as a crank, a busybody, a third-rate taproom philosopher. And vet, judged by the test of his impact on his own generation and many since. Thomas Paine was the most farseeing Englishman of the eighteenth century. He was the greatest exile ever driven from our shores. In the teeth of all the slanders and the libels, he remains the major prophet of democracy and represen-



tative government, the much-vaun

N ALL HISTORY there is no mo curious story than that of Pain blaze to fame, his pitiable fa A and then the slow but assure recovery of his reputation. Strange that recovery itself is chiefly his ov achievement; it is due to the pe sistent potency of his pen. No mast of the English language-with t exception of H. N. Brailsford in of brief, classic essay-has written h biography.\* It is Paine's own wr ings that have made his name su vive while the forgotten historial were busy expurgating it from the records; almost every great dem cratic statesman or writer has four his way back to the source book And yet even on this reckoning, as writer, Paine has seldom had h due, American Tories who dislike

\* This sentence is not intended as reflection on Moncure Conway's exceller and well-researched two-volume wor which, published in 1892, started th work of rehabilitation, after Paine an the Painites had had to endure nearly century of defamation on both sides of the Atlantic. And here for sure was a attempt by an American to repay the del to "the Englishman," who wrote Commo Sense and so described himself on th front page of the first edition. But Con way's book, for all its many virtues, doe not place Thomas Paine's life in its fu worldwide setting, and none of the other who have written about him would clain to have achieved that spacious feat. H has not received the historical treatmer accorded to all the other founders of th American Republic. Neither the Unite States, nor the other country of his adoj tion, nor his England has given him hi due. No single country, no exclusive cree can claim him as its own; that is part of his greatness.

arguments found fault with his mmar. Hazlitt was scoffed at for ling him a great writer. More en than not, since then, any refere to his literary claims is comssed into a few patronizing paraphs. While he lived, his pamphlets bably had a bigger sale than anyng published since the invention the printing press, second only to Bible. Since his death they have n reprinted and reprinted again almost every language. Monetary st sellers can be dismissed; but how the critics deride the verdict of mammoth an electorate?

Certainly, his pamphlets someies seem ill constructed and unn. There is none of the smooth fection of Swift, although Paine, e Hazlitt and Cobbett, had obvisly soaked himself in Swift. There indeed a grating, metallic flavor some of his writing. All the mysies of the universe are quickly ide to fit into his mechanical, symtrical system; the lack of subtlety d color can begin to pall. But then, idenly, the whole surrounding idscape is lit up by another streak lightning. These are the real riches Paine's prose, the abundance of aphorisms, sharp, hard, and gliting, like diamonds. How the gorous eloquence of Edmund Burke the tragedy of Marie Antoinette thers before Paine's most famous igram: he pities the plumage, but rgets the dying bird. More, perps, than all the others who revolted ainst the English prose style of the ghteenth century, Paine changed e fashion. He is still read because is still modern. He is also, therere, a foremost figure in the history English literature.

The curiosity is that his immortalicould so easily have been foreseen. If the historians had to do was to this contemporaries bear witness, an age when it took weeks to cross the Atlantic, he gained an international notoriety such as only rock ars have today. News of the spirit had aroused around the American ampfires spread fast across the civited world. Little children in Philatelphia and New York knew the ame of "Mr. Common Sense." A long specially composed in his hon-

or—"He comes, the great Reformer comes"—was sung in the London taverns. He was appointed an honorary member of the French Convention. When he set foot in Calais the whole town turned out to see him, and pretty girls gave him cockades all the way to Paris. Hazlitt wrote:

In 1792 Paine was so great, or so popular an author, and so much read and admired, that the Government was obliged to suspend the Constitution, and to go to war to counteract the effects of his popularity.

Of course the exaggeration was intended, but was it really so wide of the mark? The real crime of Thomas Muir, sentenced to exile in Botany Bay for fourteen years, was the circulation he had given to Paine's Rights of Man; twenty-six years later Richard Carlile was put away in solitary confinement in Dorchester jail for a similar offense. And even today no historian has fully unraveled how large a part was played by fear of the English Jacobins-with Paine as their most effective spokesman-in sending the England of William Pitt to war with revolutionary France. "A statue of gold ought to be erected to you in every city of the universe," said Napoleon, who searched out the old rebel in some Paris back street. Napoleon claimed, no doubt falsely, that he slept with the Rights of Man under his pillow. Paine was not deceived by the flattering "French charlatan," but Napoleon's measure of the man and his influence surely offers some proof of his significance.

Finally, the greatest American of the age never wavered in his opinion. Thomas Jefferson always paid honor to Thomas Paine. He knew how Paine had shaped and captured—and refused to betray-the spirit of 1776. That was his supreme moment. Paine was not the very first to use the word but he, more than any other, had made the Americans unafraid to declare their independence. "The debate is ended," he insisted; America might fight. It was as if, in the Britain of 1940, the Churchill resistance speeches had been made not by a national leader but by an unknown journalist who suddenly forced his way to the center of the stage.

Indeed, in another sense, it was so much more difficult for Paine to give the summons to battle. It was not merely that he made Americans see the prize of independence as something within their grasp; not merely that he personified their frustrations in his picture of George III, the "Royal Brute of England," the "hardened, sullen-tempered Pharaoh." He had also to persuade the aristocratic experts and fainthearts that an upstart pamphleteer understood the English political system better than they. It was not true that the king was the unwilling prisoner of his ministers, that a message of magnanimous reprieve and reconciliation would miraculously arrive by the next boat. Paine never had the advantage of studying Lewis Namier, but he knew how the structure of politics in the reign of George III really worked. He explained how the king and his ministers distributed their "loaves and fishes." He knew the contempt in which "the colonists" were held. He knew, while most Americans would not face it. that America must fight. Jefferson was only nineteen at the time, but he never forgot the man who performed this service for his country.

OW GROTESQUE, then, in the face of all these contemporary tributes, is the Lale that Paine's reputation was something of a bubble. His strength was that he saw with shining clarity the forces changing his world. History offers few examples of such confident and breathtaking foresight. He always believed that the words he had written in some desperate garret forecast the shape of things to come. No cloud of uncertainty crossed his horizon-neither when he walked amid Washington's bedraggled and beaten armies, nor when he was being hunted out of England for his high treason with Pitt's policemen on his heels, nor even, on that most macabre occasion, when he waited in one of Robespierre's prisons to be taken to the guillotine. That was an hour of disillusion and despair if ever there was one. He, the most merciless exposer

of monarchy, had pleaded for the king's life in the name of mercy; and when his own life was at stake even his beloved America would not breathe a word to rescue him. Yet with his great argument on earth gone temporarily awry, Paine turned to put heaven to rights. He settled down in his overcrowded cell to write The Age of Reason.

Of course, such faith was fanaticism, but it was the fanaticism of genius. Always, once he had become a public figure, Paine was proud, cocksure, incorrigibly combative, and vain; vain, in particular, about his writings. (Who wouldn't be, when all his major works sold at least 100,000 copies within a matter of months?) Nothing could shake his conviction that within his own lifetime or shortly afterward-and thanks largely to his own Atlas-like exertions—the world would be turned upside down. He knew he possessed the implement that could work the miracle—the power of free speech, free writing, and free thought, Nothing could induce in him a hairsbreadth of doubt: the bigger the bonfires they made of his books, the bigger would be the sales. No other figure in history can ever have believed in the power of freedom-and not merely its virtue-with Paine's single-minded intensity. That was his secret. "Mankind." he said, with his grand simplicity, "are not now to be told they shall not think, or they shall not read." And, incredibly, he was proved right, as near as mortal man can be.

Thus, if the historians malign Paine himself, they are still forced to acknowledge the victory of his opinions. Our modern, spacious histories of his times, written with all the advantages of hindsight, portray the American Revolution, the French Revolution, and the movement that led to the English Reform Bill as three parts of the same whole. Each reacted on the other and each is incomprehensible without the other. A few Englishmen realized that the cause of English freedom was at stake in the American revolt. A few Englishmen realized that English freedom might be forfeited in the war against revolutionary France. A few Americans realized America's interest in the triumph of the French Revolution. Paine had seen that the same battle was being fought in all three countries. He was the link between the three convulsions. He, an Englishman (and thus he signed anonymously his great American pamphlet, Common Sense), was given the key of the Bastille by Lafayette to take across the Atlantic and lay on Washington's table. He wrote:

That the principles of America opened the Bastille is not to be doubted, and therefore the key comes to the right place. I am returned from France to London. and am engaged to return to Paris when the Constitution shall be proclaimed and to carry the American flag in the procession. I have not the least doubt of the final and complete success of the French Revolution, Little ebbings and flowings, for and against, the natural companions of revolution, sometimes appear; but the full current of it is, in my opinion, as fixed as the Gulf Stream.

The England that had denounced Paine as a traitor could not remain immune: it was washed by the same sea. William Blake had helped him escape from London, William Cobbett, once his most ferocious assailant, admitted: "at his expiring flambeau I lighted my taper." All the other English rebels who raised the ferment that led to the Reform Bill pored over his forbidden pages. "Government is for the living, not for the dead," had been Paine's reply to Burke in 1791; forty years later, England marched on, in company with France and America, along the road that Paine, not Burke, had mapped out for her.

NOUGH OF achievement for one man, surely—to understand the three great revolutions of his age before they happened, to bring politics home to the common people, to build a bridge of common idealism across the Atlantic and the English Channel (as firm as the real iron bridge that he invented in his spare time). Yet this was not all. Scattered through his writings we can find hints, often much

more than hints, of the other idthat have given vitality to the decratic movement for the past in

Almost a century before Linco he sought to write into the America Constitution a clause against slave Long before even John Stuart MI he championed the rights of woman He was among the very first of E lish writers to espouse the cause Indian freedom, Well ahead of old friends Richard Crossman a Barbara Castle, he had a good p for old-age pensions. And how menall our modern parties might trem at his proposals for land nationalition; he wanted new laws for m riage and divorce: international ar tration, family allowances, matern benefits, free education, prison form, full employment-yes, mu of the future the Labor party w offered was previously on offer. even better English, from Thom Paine. Note how true these sing syllables ring with the triumphat organ note of that last final word: " is wrong to say God made rich ar poor; He made only male and femal and He gave them the earth for the inheritance "

It was not until more than 15 years after his death that a statue Thomas Paine was erected in En land (after a protest, in the ye 1963, from a Thetford Conservative councilor: "A monument to Thom: Paine on the Market Place would I an insult to the town"). The French and the Americans were less churlis Paine himself, for all his vanit would probably agree with Cato, wh said he would prefer people to as why he had not a monument erecte to him than why he had. Even s surely it is time to make amends. ( can it be that our establishment, m ticulously ticking off those items his program still unachieved, fee that no unnecessary chances can l taken? The man still lives. Rights Man still sells some 5,000 copies year, and even that "Devil's Pray Book," The Age of Reason, can st be read, if not to bring down thu derbolts from heaven, at least prove that the "filthy little atheis was not an atheist at all.

HARPER'S/AUGUST 19

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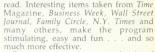
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# **VESTMENT STRATEGIES**

Wearing your fortune on your back

by Louis T. Gra

NCE AN American has "made his pile" he begins to search for ways of protecting it. The wall safe in the basement is a practical solution to a ticklish problem, especially for those in the food-service business who skim. But skim does not multiply in a wall safe . . . although scientists are working on that.

The conservative American businessman still needs a wise investment strategy.

That's where KBS comes in.

Say you have a forty-table fastfood and pizza outlet. You got into the business at just the right time, around 1973. According to Emma Rothschild, a professor at MIT, "Three industries each provided more than a million new jobs during the 1973-1979 period: 'eating and drinking places, including fast-food restaurants; 'health services,' including private hospitals, nursing homes, and doctors' and dentists' offices; and 'business services.' . . . These three industries together accounted for more than 40 percent of the new private jobs created between 1973 and the summer of 1980.... The increase in employment in eating and drinking places since 1973 is greater than the total employment in the automobile and steel industries combined."

So you made the right decision at the right time, entrepreneur. Your overhead is low, your profits (like your prices) are high, and you're skimming right along.

Your overhead is low because you employ women in large numbers.

According to Rothschild, "Women account for...56 percent of all people employed in eating and drinking places."

Your overhead is low, Rothschild explains, because "people working in eating and drinking places work the shortest weekly hours of any industry: 26.4 hours in 1979, compared to an average of 35.7 for the entire private economy, and 40.2 in manufacturing."

Your overhead is low because you pay your employees sensible nonunion wages: "Hourly earnings in services, measured in 1972 dollars, Louis T. Grant teaches English at Catonsville Community College in Catonsville, Maryland.



fell from \$3.16 in 1973 to \$3.08

Your overhead is low because yo employees come and go with gre frequency. By the nature of yo business you cannot offer them future. "Eating and drinking placemploy 92 percent nonsuperviso workers."

Your overhead is low because yeare in the enviable position of offeing temporary and part-time emploment to women who have no uniorepresentation, no future in your employ. Few of them ever earn "benefit package."

If you're selling pizza at a prin location, you could be declarir \$100,000 taxable income a year ar filling your basement wall safe wi \$30,000 skim annually.

We at KBS take pride in knowir your business as well as our owr Our company motto is: Your Business is Our Business.

So the wall safe is full. You can stuff another \$500 wad of crisp ne twenties in there. The \$5,000 electronic burglar-alarm system has bee installed. Every window and door it the house is wired to the local polic station.

Yet Bernard Welch did kill M chael Halberstam, didn't he?

These are perilous times. Wit double-digit inflation fed by defic spending, and the Federal Reserv Bank pursuing an expansionary mor ey policy, even under conservativ monetarists like Burns and Volcke you need a sound investment strategy.

That's where we at KBS come in

OU'VE GOT a good head on your shoulders. You subscribe to the L. T. Patterson Strategy Letter for 9.95 a year, to the International ry Schultz Letter for \$258 a year, to the Dines Letter. You bought th African mining stock at \$32 are on Dines's recommendation. 've got \$100,000 in gold bullion our safe-deposit box and another 0.000 tied up in gold certificates. ou've read Fred Muller's Amers Coming Nightmare Inflation. nomic Collapse, and Crime Revion. You read Joe Granville reously. His "tree of indicators" is its roots through every conin your money-making in. His "on-balance volume" techue turns vou on. You're one of select 3,000 who get his "early ning" stock-market service. Yet 've never heard of KBS.

You read Eliot Janeway and Harry wne and Lewis Lehrman and Roy tram and Milton Friedman and le Wanniski and Albert Lowry l Richard Russell. You're heavy o gold. And not one of these idits has ever mentioned KBS. You're alert. You're warv. You re among the 4,732 money-makers the National Committee for Monry Reform convention in New leans last November. You're not e that monetary reform is a good a. The crazy marketplace causes u a lot of anxiety, but you know w to skim along the surface of it d it's making you as rich as Wayne wton. At the convention NCRM airman James Blanchard predicted at Reagan would not be able to ibilize prices. Harry Browne, who ged everybody to buy gold in 1973 nen it was \$65 an ounce, says it ll go down to maybe \$300 an ince by the end of 1981 but could se to \$3,000 an ounce in three to ur years. But if NCRM and Howd Sedgemark of the Institute on oney and Inflation and Jesse Helms we their way, we will go back to )33 and the gold standard.

You've spent a three-day weekend Arizona with Survive America, arning to read a compass, build a re, and shoot deer, in case it all ills apart, as Fred Muller predicts. You're not surprised that "health services" have provided a million new jobs since 1973. (Look how Americans eat!) The nation's health is rapidly deteriorating under the social and economic—not to say moral—conditions of the day. Stress-related illness. "somatizing," heart attack, some cancer, are all part of "the situation" that sent you to New Orleans to hear Nicholas Deak say, "I don't see why the recipient of welfare should have the right to vote. He will only vote for more welfare," and to Arizona to learn wilderness skills.

Before you left for Arizona you went to a therapist for \$40 an hour and he told you that you would have to visit the psychiatrist he works with for \$80 an hour before you could see him. When you asked him why the psychiatrist charges \$80 an hour, he explained that psychiatrists are among the worst-paid doctors. They really can't handle more than four or five patients daily and they have to maintain expensive offices. In order to have the status of doctors and live as doctors should, they have to charge \$80 an hour.

You haven't read Social Darwinism in American Thought by Richard Hofstadter, but you have read Looking Out for No. 1 and Winning Through Intimidation. You understand.

Every window and door in your house is wired into the police station to protect the skim in your wall safe and the key to the bullion in your safe-deposit box from the boyfriends of the women you pay \$3.08 an hour to make fast food fast part-time.

That's where KBS comes in.

You voted for Ronald Reagan because he's a good actor and he promised to increase military spending, return 30 percent of your tax dollar to you by 1983 for "reinvestment," and balance the budget. You don't care a lot how he does that as long as he reduces the size of the federal bureaucracy, reduces entitlement programs, stops the food stamps and the school lunches and other give-away programs for the children of the women you pay \$3.08 an hour to make the fast food fast part-time.

You want Alexander Haig poised like an ICBM at the State Depart-

ment. You want an impregnable missile system protecting the nation within which you have an electronic burglar-alarm system protecting the house protecting the wall safe chockful of skim money, like a nest of boxes with you and your loved ones in the center box all snug. We must maintain the integrity of the system.

That's where KBS comes in.

E. F. Hutton is your broker, your credit rating is A1, and you are asking, "What can the folks at KBS do for me?"

We at KBS do not like to brag, but we believe we have the Polaroid and IBM of the Eighties, the sweetest little growth stock since Comsat.

Henry Kissinger began wearing our product in the early 1970s. Former president Gerald Ford

owns a golfing jacket lined with it.
When Pope John Paul II visited
this great nation of ours last year to
speak of love he was given a rain-

coat made of it.

Three state governors who stood next to President Reagan at the most expensive inaugural gala ever wore clothes made of it.

So did the \$12-million-a-year Las Vegas warblers entertaining Reagan. Wayne Newton, for instance.

The Secret Service buys it directly from us wholesale.

Ronald Reagan carried a raincoat lined with it to the Washington Hilton on a recent rainy day. He did not wear that raincoat when he left.

Light as nylon, Kevlar is the body armor now worn by at least half of the 650,000 policemen protecting the lives and hard-earned wealth of America's swellest citizens.

Kevlar is the miracle fiber that will stop a .357 Magnum bullet at

point-blank range.

The price of gold may rise or fall, the market may go up or down, Joe Granville may tell you to buy or sell, but one thing is certain: whatever Americans of distinction are wearing in the Eighties, it will be lined with Kevlar.

See our two-page ad in Women's Wear Daily.

Kevlar Bulletproof Systems stock goes public this week. Need we say more?

HARPER'S/AUGUST 1981

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Three authentic fiesta menus from colonial Mexico. Eighteen unique dishes from Sopa Azteca to Tapado Borracho. Elegant desserts. In English, \$4; Spanish, \$6. Fiesta, Recreo 35, San Miguel Allende, GTO, Mexico.

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# PUZZLE

#### PRESSING MATTERS

by E. R. Galli and Richard Maltby, Jr.

#### This month's instructions:

The diagram contains five unclued horizontal lights (entries), all members of a certain group, each of which is related to one of five unclued vertical lights, members of another group. Each horizontal light crosses the vertical light to which it is related. 18 Across (a variant spelling) describes how they are related. The horizontal light may cross more than one vertical light, but will be related to only one of them. One horizontal light consists of two words.

Clue answers include eight proper nouns, one a trademark. As always, mental repunctuation of a clue is the key to its

The answer to last month's puzzle appears on page 74.

#### CLUES

#### ACROSS

8. Ill-mannered fellow turns on Reagan-this varn's not natural (6) 9. One of Plato's letters describes besieging Sparta (4)

10. Dash through a winding lane (4)

- 11. Political radical finds something corny in Hindu worshiper! (7)
- 12. Feeders get excessive charges with air-conditioned interior (11)
- 14. Go West, young man, it is like the sea (5)

16. Paramount, but mostly partially (6)

18. See instructions (12)

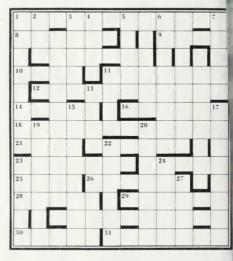
21. Wet and gloomy, thanks in large part to the Germans

23. Complainer gets into row to be devious (7)

- 25. Looking back on it, in the MGM blockbuster she was played by Christie and Lake (4) 26. Straightened out false denial (6)
- 28. WASPs to Jews: guit Christian club, and I am tagging along (5)

29. Clears out something in the eye (6) 30. Tight ends gaining yard (5)

31. Stand the restaurant bill, or eat, being left unfilled (7)



#### DOWN

1. Paid attention and avoided involving Democrat (8)

Algonquin Indian's loot is curtailed (3)

3. Avatollah Khomeini, for instance, could add a name and still remain a citizen! (5)

4. Cries for really rotten people (4)

5. A bit of fun I attended with a Christian from the East

6. Nab moral degenerates as incongruous (8)

7. Gains attention over Poles (5)

- 11. Famous psychologist put an indefinite number in iail (4) 13. Look, between two bishops it's an ill-defined Mass (4)
- 15. Unites potassium and argon on the inside-these are basic to the chemist (8)
- 17. Almost all of petty cash squandered doing the same thing in the movies (8)

19. An oribi shot here—that's capital! (7)

- 20. From this smoker came colonels, if you'd only listen! (7) Nobody at home, apparently, going to the full (3-3)
- 23. Loud, loose garment, when lifted, sticks in a bunch (5)

24. Good day contract he will love (5)

27. Does sound expensive (4)

#### CONTEST RULES

Send completed diagram with name and address to Pressing Matters, Harper's Magazine, Two Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Entries must be received by August 8. Senders of the first three solutions opened will receive a one-year subscription to Harper's,

The solution will be printed in the September issue. Winners' names will be printed in the October issue. Winners of the June puzzle, "Head-Hunting," are Ralph W. Cain, Austin, Texas; Susan Kleiman, Sarasota, Florida; and Nan Sparrow, Alameda, California. September 1981 September 1981 \$200

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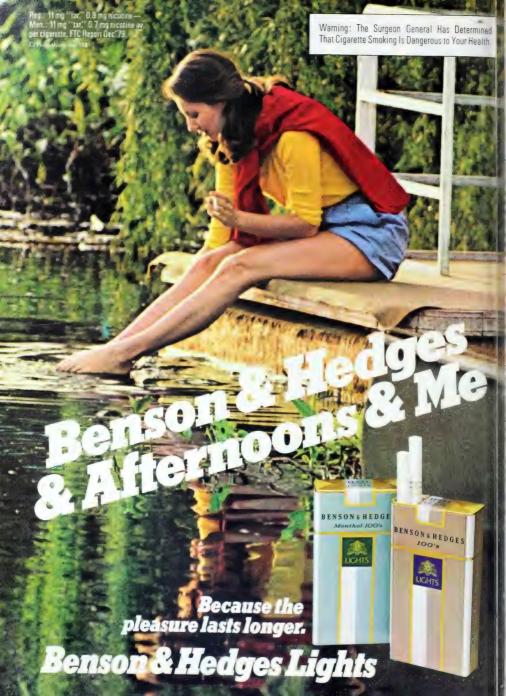


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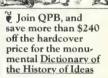
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# Crooks and Clowns on TV

See the dastard. Hiss at him. See the dolt. Hoot at him. They're both businessmen, TV variety.

In the skimpy fare served up as network entertainment night after night, the business world is peopled mostly by ne'er-dowells and nincompoops. Likely as not, businessmen and women are portrayed on the tube as schemers and lawbreakers, a la J.R. Ewing, or else they're bubbleheads bumbling about and mouthing off for laughs, in the manner of Archie Bunker.

Such are the key gleanings of a study, first of its kind ever done, looking into the way television depicts people in business. The study found that two out of every three businessmen on television come across as foolish, greedy, or evil. In the prime-time view, over half of all corporate chiefs commit illegal acts, ranging from fraud to murder. Some 45% of all business activities are shown as illicit. Only 3% of TV business people behave in ways that are socially and economically productive.

The study, titled Crooks, Conmen and Clowns: Businessmen in TV Entertainment, was done by The Media Institute, a Washington-based research organization that seeks to improve the level and quality of media coverage of business and economic affairs. If the institute's researchers wound up their work bug-eyed and babbling, that's understandable. They peered at 200 episodes of the top 50 series on ABC, CBS, and NBC: sitcoms, shoot-'em-ups, dramas, and the like. The sample excluded all specials, sporting events, and news programs.

Analyzing the shows' content and characters, the institute confirmed what some of us in business have long been squirming about: As pictured by the floppy-

necked quiche nibblers who dream up network series, most businessmen are either blackguards or buffoons. "Businessmen on prime-time television are consistently shown in an unflattering light," The Media Institute said. "Sixtyseven percent are portrayed in a negative manner—as criminals, fools, or greedy or malevolent egotists—while only 25% are shown in a positive light."

The bigger the business, the more unfavorably its practitioners are painted. The leaders of large companies tend to be cast as out-and-out crooks, lesser executives as mere miscreants, and small businessmen as dimwits. In TV's vision of business, ethics are about as rare as rowboats in the Sahara.

Why the perverse portrayals? Leonard J. Theberge, president of The Media Institute, points out that TV entertainment adheres to a simplistic format of good versus bad. In years past, "bad" was personified by such societal stereotypes as minorities, ethnic groups, and women. Happily, such stereotypes have all but been eliminated. Still, the bad-guy slot remains to be filled. Business folks, it seems, make suitably handy villains and knuckleheads

Theberge notes, too, the existence of "cultural reasons which might explain a bias by TV writers against businessmen. For example, it is not a new phenomenon for creative artists to look down on the commercial sector."

Two ironies obtrude. One is that the networks whose shows project businessmen as scoundrels and jesters are themselves commercial enterprises run by, yes, businessmen. The other is that the programs denigrating business are supported by advertising dollars from — you guessed it — business.





ISLAND OF INSTABILITY Frank Gervasi 13 With or without AWACS, the Saudis have mostly themselves to fear. Richard L. Whalen 19 THE CASE FOR BANKRUPTCY Insolvency is one cure for inflation. Richard West 22 THE NEWEST CLASS Tito's proletariat discovers the West. Paul Theroux 31 MONEY AND ART Patronage doesn't make you talented, it just makes you richer. Bryan F. Griffin 41 PANIC AMONG THE PHILISTINES Fakery and vulgar bravado in an age of cultural collapse. Martim Avillez 57 THE BOMB SHELTER OF YOUR DREAMS Catalogue for survival. Mairtin O Cadhain 61 THE YEAR 1912 A story. ARTS AND LETTERS BOOKS PONY OR PEGASUS Joel Agee 70 Maiming great literature for the sake of a good English read. IN PRINT Jeffrey Burke 78 Eighty-five hours with Marcel Proust. POETRY Siv Cedering 80 Ukiyo-e REVISIONS Peter Gay 83 The nocturnal Freud. DEPARTMENTS LETTERS 4 THE EASY CHAIR Lewis H. Lapham The Reagan administration and the arts. 68 **GEOGRAPHY 105** ARS POLITICA Steven Brodner 77 Tom Wolfe 82 IN OUR TIME THE MIND'S EYE 87 David Suter AMERICAN MISCELLANY Barbara Grizzuti 88 Harrison A conference on sex and language. E. R. Galli and 96 PUZZLE Richard Maltby, Jr. Sixes and sevens. Cover illustration by Richard Merkin

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## LETTERS

#### Truth to facts

I am in awe of your essay "Gilding the News" [Harper's, July]—horrified by its central revelation but still stunned by its excellence. Rarely does one essay explain so much.

Standing way, way back from what you wrote, I am left wondering whether the liberal-vs.-conservative antagonism may not finally be the manifestation, in modern times, of that old Plato-vs.-Aristotle dispute concerning where reality lies.

For liberals, who by and large tend to be Platonists, "stories move from truth to facts," as you rightly point out. And so the liberal ideology, like some immutable divine idea, has tended to remain true for liberals whether the events of real life supported it or not.

Whereas for conservatives, who tend to be either Aristotelians (or Aquinists, a related breed), facts generate truths. Conservatives will stare owlishly at facts—at what happens, at the torrent of stuff that beats relentlessly on the senses—until their eyes glaze over and their brains burn out. For them reality begins at home. It rarely occurs to conservatives to redo creation, to "play God." This is surely why the churches normally do not feel threatened by the conservative vision.

In view of all of this, I disagree with you that during recent years American conservatives have been spinning their ideology into supportive fictions as freely as the libera have been. Conservatives tend to I gripped by the Aristotelian notic that humans possess the truth whe that which is in our minds corr sponds with what is "out there," i reality. It is just not like them t take so seriously (more seriousl than things, events, stuff) the cortents of their own heads.

BARBARA NAUE New Orleans, La

I just finished reading your piec on the pretensions of the media, an I thank you for writing it. It took lot of hard thinking to sort out th morass of present impulses and pas trends to put down so fair an anal ysis of the mirror effect of the new on society.

I've been subscribing to Harper's Atlantic, and The New Yorker for a least a dozen years, and I assure you there is an audience of like-minded readers out here who still burn daily calories in the effort to distinguish the overamplified "newsoftheday' from the authentic and honest human voice of the creative and critical intelligence.

Martha Heimberg Dallas, Tex.

From my early youth my father wanted me to be a journalist. He instilled in me the makings of contemporary values: "All politicians are crooks, and everything in black and white is slick fiction."

So I went to journalism school. In

e first year we learned formula riting (even the exams were graded r computer). By the second year ose of us on the dean's list subituted a short-fiction class for column writing. Third year we passed urnalism law. At the end of my udies I was awarded a B.A. in neater.

And that's the truth.

Molly M. Fowler New York, N.Y.

In one way or other I have been journalism nearly thirty-one years -writer/reporter, editor, publicist, thor. Not in that time, or even in ndergraduate days, have I ever had clear and effective a journalism leson as in Editor Lapham's "Gilding ie News" essay. He neatly articuted some of my own vague suspiions. I hadn't realized the many ns I had been committing, having eretofore been blissfully content to print the news and raise hell." Now eservedly contrite, I suppose the nly thing to do, even at this late tage, is to consider a change in caer objective, say, to taking orders t a McDonald's hamburger stand.

But alas! The same sins are comnitted there, where the objective is ot necessarily to sell a good sandtich, but to sell the customer the mpression he is eating a good sand-

vich. Seems to work.

ROBERT W. TOPPING West Lafayette, Ind.

Lewis Lapham paints an unflatterng portrait of journalists and of a ociety that is all too willing to actept their wares as fact.

The public is taking a beating. The audience becomes an unwitting accomplice to a crime when it bezins to believe what some journal-

sts dispense.

There is something reprehensible about telling stories without identifying them as such. A ready copy of Grimms' Fairy Tales should serve to satisfy the feelings of those journalists who have a passion for fictional creations. Let its presence remind them that fact ought to be the stuff of their dispatches.

President Kennedy once said, "For of those to whom much is giv-

en, much is required." Trust is the hinge of the public-press relationship; truth is the least we must expect from the press.

PAUL A. KELLOGG New York, N.Y.

"Gilding the News" almost begins to address the point subtly made in your opening quotation by Harry Truman. If I understand your theme correctly, it is that "news" suffers from pervasive mediocrity on both sides of the market. But I think that Mr. Truman had something more in mind.

It seems to me that you might have made useful connections between "managed news" and the interests of the "Equestrian Class." Just how does the sloth of the reading public compare with the interests of this group in keeping the truth from the public so that their position is not called into question? How does this market work, where there are millions of demanders of news of all sorts, but relatively few suppliers? What are the implications of conglomeration in the industry? Is the Gannett chain or the Washington Post bringing us better news, or just more managed news?

Take the subject of energy, reported on ad infinitum since 1973. How much information did the managed news bring us on the geological facts? Who, before 1973, was saying that we were running out of oil in terms of potential production? I dare say not reputable geologists, particularly those familiar with the results of aerial cartography work. Now, the managed news is slowly releasing bits of the truth about the huge reserves in South America, Antarctica, the Arctic, the Overthrust Belt, off Guatemala, etc., etc., etc. Why not the facts? Because the few are making too much loot by keeping the real facts to themselves. O.E.D.

ALBERT J. ECKSTEIN Whittier, Calif.

#### The Art of Building

In "From Bauhaus to Our House" [Harper's, June-July 1981], Tom Wolfe constructs a dazzling argu-

ment, then lays in his capstone upside down. Robert Venturi, writes Wolfe, did not "for a moment dispute the underlying assumptions of modern architecture: namely, that it was to be for the people; that it should be nonbourgeois... and that the architect, from his vantage point inside the compound, would decide what was best for the people and what they inevitably should have."

One would expect a reporter as experienced as Tom Wolfe to have checked out such a claim with the only witnesses able to validate it: namely, Venturi's clients. But like the modernists he ridicules, Wolfe has ignored Venturi's clients in favor of his own convenient image of them as hapless prisoners in ingenious buildings that they're obliged to redecorate to make livable.

As a Venturi client and happy tenant of exactly the building we built, I can tell you it isn't so. Granted, the Venturis are deft theoreticians who delight in winning academic word wars. But Venturi is also an architect who listens with elaborate care to his clients' dreams and strives

to embody them.

Look at Venturi's range: from the urban-ugly Guild house, to a ritzy green-brick suburban icon, to a recessive shingled pavillon de chasse, to a "Bermuda house" that looks like all other rich Bermudans' houses only different, to a "Mount Vernon house" for a client who aspired to resemble George Washington in retirement. Unlike the buildings of the modernists or their progeny, the Whites, Venturi's buildings all look different, precisely because he is not arrogant enough to impose his truth on his clients or scorn their visions. He realizes that all dreams (and what is a building but a dream?) are both tinged with glory and tainted with absurdity. So yes, there is irony in his buildings, but it is an amiable irony that respects rather than sneers at his clients' wishes.

Wolfe is right: Venturi does cap his argument, but not as he suggests. Venturi represents the rejection of the heroic tradition of architect as priest, social seer, and arrogant arbiter of taste. Venturi believes, as I think Wolfe believes, that the dreams

of ordinary people are more interesting, various, and apt than the compound-incubated fantasies of all-knowing architects. The trick, of course, is to give people what they want without giving them life-deadening clichés, to give them buildings that are both traditional and original. That is Venturi's talent; in my view, his genius—that he is both smart enough, and humble enough, to listen.

Tom Wolfe's two-part article dealing with contemporary architecture is interesting, sometimes witty, and often inaccurate.

CARLL TUCKER New York, N.Y.

Failures of the design profession's effort are well known. Peter Blake, a competent architect and journalist, systematically identified these in his Form Follows Fiasco. They have been a popular topic ever since.

Nineteenth-century eclecticism and the backwash of early industrialization left architecture in a shambles. In this vacuum some thoughtful and exceedingly strong individuals emerged. A great deal is demanded by revolutionary movements. But James Marston Fitch wonders if we haven't forgotten what the revolution was all about. It's hard to appreciate opportunity if its originations are unknown. This concern was expressed in the January 1980 issue of the AIA Journal.

Few critics knew Wright, Gropius, Mies, and Corbu better than Ludwig Hilberseimer, author of Contemporary Architecture, Its Roots and Trends. He walked and talked with each of them. That's an advantage that Tom Wolfe did not have.

ROBERT LAWTON JONES Tulsa, Okla.

#### Trial by newsprint

Carol Burnett's stunning victory over the National Enquirer seems to prove that Good will triumph over Wickedness, especially if Good is an immensely popular entertainer with a quarter of a million dollars available to spend on lawyers. It doesn't hurt if Wickedness is a corpora-

tion that got rich pandering to the vices of the very people who cheer Carol Burnett's big win. In other words, another major score for hy-

The National Enquirer was lynched by a mixed mob of celebrities and angels. The publication was certainly guilty of sleaze and recklessness, but we are supposed to be against lynching anyhow—and the publicity circus of support for Carol Burnett would have hanged an innocent defendant as readily as a guilty one.

The whole trial raises some deadly questions—the familiar one about the cost of justice and the less familiar one about the use of the press by celebrities to plead their causes.

The one about the cost of justice was illuminated for me some years ago when I was involved in a divorce proceeding under the old California law. My attorney asked me how much money I had, and when I told him, he said, "You haven't got enough money for justice, but it'll buy a little law."

In the Burnett matter, when the presiding judge ruled that the National Enquirer was, for this purpose, a magazine rather than a newspaper, he was offering a contemporary version of another old courtroom saw, "We'll give him a fair trial and then we'll hang him." Carol Burnett fans (there are no known detractors) cheered, wounded celebrities took heart, and newspaper editors sighed with relief. They could now feel free to join the lynch mob too.

There has been very little questioning as to how the judge arrived at his remarkable conclusion that what looks like a newspaper, calls itself a newspaper, and is sold and bought as a newspaper, however scurrilous, is nevertheless a magazine. There has been even less questioning about the appropriateness of a law that exempts daily and weekly newspapers from punishment for misdeeds but that can come down heavily on newsmagazines. Heavy, slick paper and a staple in the side doesn't seem to justify such a difference. Besides, the National Enquirer doesn't even have those stigmata. It is, to all intents and purposes, a sleazy, nondaily newspaper specializing in a particular kell of news. But the judge said other wise.

As to the wedding of newsbiz ad showbiz, quite a lot has been a marked-especially with respect to TV news, where the standards it qualification for news readers seem be irrelevant to their qualification as journalists. Less noticed is the tention-fawning, groveling, and list itless attention-paid by news p grams of all sorts to entertainers all sorts. The differences between shows like "Today" and, say, "Me Griffin" are narrowing. If Griffin cal ried a news summary and a weath report they would be nearly into changeable-unless it is postulated that Jane Pauley's global insights at clearly superior to Griffin's.

The result of the blurring of the lines and the hyping of the rating was evident enough while the Bunett-Enquirer trial went on. Carl Burnett and fellow wounded cele rities crowded Reagan and Haig of the six and eleven o'clock nev shows. In fact, the whole event provided TV news with the opportunit to do exactly what the National Ei quirer does in print, while paradin its own virtue by looking down it nose at that rag. It's a trick not un familiar to showbiz, of course-th DeMille special, "Wallow in it whil you preach agin' it."

People whose lives are devoted t seizing the spotlight saw an unparalleled opportunity. Johnny Carso bared his wounds and his fangs, annimble Jerry Brown sent a not quit discreet valentine. A jury on th moon would have felt the temper ature in that courtroom, but th niceties were preserved. "Did yo see the 'Carson' show? Would see ing it sway your judgment?"

Absolutely not, your honor Where's the rope?

There was an actors' strike not long ago that demonstrated the extent to which TV news has become show biz-connected. The news programs were all filled with famous faces on the picket line—all making impassioned speeches about the justice of their cause. The local talk-show station, KABC, simply went overboard and featured endless guest-host shots

th militantly unemployed actors 10 interviewed other actors about eir righteousness. Michael Jackn, a talk-show host who has beme a kind of journalist by doing nat journalists do (and doing it ell), practically turned over his imensely influential programs to Ed mer and Mike Farrell to thump the b for their side of the argument. rtunately the issue was not before court of law and fortunately (?) e producers on the other side of at argument are inured to screams id pleas and charges of vicious actices. They hunkered down and

But the extraordinary partiality of ABC and its people started someing else-and long after the actors' rike was settled, listeners heard ichael Jackson break into Washgton interviews with elected offials to give a few moments to the me Ed Asner, now an impasoned opponent of our foreign poly in Central America.

All of which tends to raise quesons that suggest there's a collision etween anyone's right to avail himelf of free-speech guarantees and ne media's hunger for rating- and rculation-building celebrity feaires. If TV time is the all-imporant measure of someone's ability get a hearing in this country, hould it become the servant of eople with either the money or the litter to buy its attention?

It's hard to work up much enthuiasm for the National Enquirer and asy to applaud Carol Burnett's courge for hanging in there. But the vicory is not a victory for the way our aws work or for the fairness and ob-

ectivity of the media.

SAUL DAVID Los Angeles, Calif.

ERRATUM

The editors regret locating the cities of Fargo and Moorhead in South Dakota ("From Bauhaus to Our House," Part 2. by Tom Wolfe, Harper's, July, page 56). Fargo is in North Dakota, and Moorhead is in Minnesota.

HARPER'S/SEPTEMBER 1981



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# THE COUNTERFEIT MUSE

Notes on the official culture

by Lewis H. Laphar

★HE QUESTION of the national obligation to the arts promises to weigh heavily on conversation this fall, and if early reports from the cultural frontiers are a fair indication of rhetoric to come, the argument seems likely to resemble a theological dispute. Ouite a number of people hold violent opinions on the subject, but relatively few can define what they mean by the word art. Art has somehow become sacred, as if it were an object or collection of objects that must be approached with a proper show of respect and a feeling of holy dread.

When the Reagan administration announced last March the decimation of the federal subsidies for the National Endowments for the Arts and the Humanities (in both cases a reduction of the annual appropriation from about \$150 million to roughly \$100 million), no cry of public indignation disturbed Congress or excited the passions of the popular press. Nobody carried placards through the streets. The silence confirmed what most people had known for many years but had been too polite to mention in supposedly literate company. Mr. Reagan conceded that the American government cannot stimulate the manufacture of high art, and his countrymen breathed a sigh of relief. No longer would they need to feign appreciation for sets of themes and variations performed by troupes of feminist mimes.

Most of the people who even Lewis H. Lapham is the editor of Harper's. bothered to notice the raid on the federal Parnassus did so with a detachment verging on indifference. Yes, it was too bad, and probably a disappointment to a cousin studying stage design in Winston-Salem, but for the country as a whole the subtraction of funds amounted to little more than accepting a tax loss on a romantic investment. Certainly the government had tried hard enough. but no matter how earnest its intentions or how munificent its expenditure of money and sentiment, the American people, so clever and inventive at so many other tasks. couldn't learn to weave the tapestries of culture.

UT IF THIS was the feeling of the unappreciative majority, for the suppliers of what has become the official sensibility the news from Washington signified the victory of the philistines. Loud and vociferous in their lament, they mourned the pillaging of the holy places. By Memorial Day the lobbies representing the rituals of artistic endeavor had begun to rally support in the more refined quarters of the media. Celebrities appeared on public television, raffling off their memorabilia and imploring the audience to win this one for Beethoven; arts councils and opera companies sent envoys to the larger corporations, among them Exxon and Citibank, appealing to the civic-mindedness of Mammon; authors of pornographic novels convened in solemn assembly and muttered sadly about the rape of the

By the end of the summer so mar worthy organizations were holding so many conferences that it was po sible to suspect them of trying distribute their funds before the ne budgets took effect. At one of thes conferences several weeks ago heard a man say that art in th United States might enjoy its long awaited renaissance if only it coul get the government off its back. H risked this observation in what h thought was secular company in the merchant city of New York, but his remark produced the shock of blas phemy in the midst of a synod c bishops.

"Good Lord," said a woman i a hat, "you can't seriously mea that . . . surely . . . I mean . . . th arts "

Her dismay was seconded by th other people in the room, almost all of them curators of museums, foun dation hierarchs of various ranks directors of regional dance theaters or critics beholden to The New York Times

Not only did the man mean whal he said, but he had the effronter to suggest that the government should dismantle the entire apparatus o what he called its ignorant and con descending patronage. "The cultura subsidy," he said, "is a coin tossec to a beggar. The government give money to art as it would give a tig to a blind man. So do the corpora tions and foundations. They hope that art will take its pittance and go away."

The scientific-industrial revolution is on the threshold of developments from biology as momentous as any that have come from physics—all the wav from the steam engine to the computer. For the new science of molecular biology has given rise to a new high technology...

Inder the title of Industrial Microbiology, the editors of CIENTIFIC AMERICAN have evoted their entire September sue to this single topic.

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- Industrial Microbiology
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The door closed on his antic opinions before he had a chance to disgrace himself further, and the assembled friends of the arts resumed their placid vilification of materialism. Listening to them talk, I noticed that the discussion of cultural subsidies tends to confuse artistic and political patronage and that by and large the speakers neglect to make a number of useful distinctions. As follows:

ì

The distinction between artistic and political patronage.

Despite the praiseworthiness of its ambition, the American democracy in the late twentieth century doesn't know how to play the part of a Medici prince living at the zenith of the Renaissance. Various individuals might still aspire to the role, but the committees and institutions assigned to elevate the public

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R.L. Crews, M.D., President COLUMBIA PACIFIC UNIVERSITY 150 Shoreline, Suite 4309 Mill Valley, California 94941 USA: 800-227-1617, ext. 480 California only: 800-772-3545, ext. 480 taste look clumsy and overdressed in the aristocratic costumes of the fifteenth century.

Undoubtedly this is a sad comment on the progress of industrialism. which could probably be developed into a philippic against mass education the dehumanization of literary criticism, and the hydrogen bomb. Given the surfeit of clichés on the theme already in circulation. I'm sure that Robert Brustein or Joseph Papp could mount an experimental revival that also portraved what the program notes would inevitably describe as the "loss of human value." The NEA or one of the oil companies probably could be persuaded to underwrite the production.

The fact remains that the rulers of the American state, most of them lawyers and businessmen, don't look to the arts to answer questions they consider important. The most expensive debates in any age resolve themselves into the question. Why do I have to die? As recently as the nineteenth century the question could be addressed by artists and clergymen. The events of the twentieth century have referred the question to the politicians, who have access to the final weapons, and to the scientists. who perhaps will discover the secret of immortality. The most beautiful images are those that sustain the illusion of immortality. If the fifteenth century discovered the face of God on the Sistine ceiling, the twentieth century looks for the same reassurance on the smooth surfaces of an ICBM.

Long ago, in the 1960s, it was thought that a nation acquiring economic and military eminence in the world should display the cultural appointments suitable to its wealth and station. Other empires had done so, most noticeably Periclean Athens, the Venetian Republic, France during the reign of Louis XIV. Surely the United States could arrange something equally impressive. Was not America richer than any other nation known to history? Were not its weapons more terrible, its virtues more numerous? How then could its painting not be more luminous, its literature more profound, its music more sublime?

The questions have ended in co edy. The United States cast itself the role of Shakespeare's Henry but discovered twenty years latsomewhat to its embarrassment, the it had been playing Molière's Bogeois Gentilhomme, Since their cretion by Congress the National H. dowments have invested nearly I billion in the hope of art, but the sult has been as disappointing a speculation in Brazilian railro bonds. American letters have detel orated to the point where their md celebrated practitioners, among the Norman Mailer and Truman Canol discover in their own personae the most memorable characters. Ame ican drama doesn't exist. In the at of sculpture, musical composition and poetry the country lacks craft men of the first rank. The landscar has been encumbered with a publi architecture of unsurpassed med ocrity, and American painting a dresses itself to the illustration aesthetic theory. The cultural in presarios can put a high gloss of foreign goods, but the more hone among them know they have live their entire lives in a period . barren of accomplishment in th creative arts as it has been prolifi of discovery in the sciences.

THE FAILURE of speculation i the arts need not be inter preted as a fall from grace At various points in tim various peoples choose to inves their energy and imagination in lit erature, poetry, music, painting drama, and architecture. Throughou most of its history the United State has pursued other interests. John Adams associated the arts with "des potism and superstition" and hope that they could be discouraged in the new republic. "To America," said Benjamin Franklin, setting the direction of the American grain for the next two hundred years, "one schoolmaster is worth a dozen poets and the invention of a machine or the improvement of an implement is of more importance than a masterpiece of Raphael."

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tion: they have made sophisticated arts of jazz music, of journalism and the movies, of history and criticism and commercial advertising: they build monumental cultural centers that stand like the forlorn fortresses of the Maginot Line, empty of meaning, perpetually on watch against the invasion that has already passed by. The Nobel prizes awarded every year to American chemists and biologists, to men unwinding the double helix and dissolving the mysteries of the stars, suggest that the great play of the American mind takes place in the theater of the sciences. The National Science Foundation continues to receive an annual stipend of \$1 billion (a grant commensurate with the national sense of priority), and it is probable that three or four hundred years hence, when only the antiquarians will remember any lines from the American poetry written in the last thirty years. schoolchildren will be taught to quote from the text of American equations.

F THE FEDERAL cultural subsidies have been notable for their failure to inspire passionate argument in the realm of aesthetics, they have been equally notable for their success in the arena of politics. What the subsidies could not call forth in the shape of poems or plays they have summoned up, in bewildering abundance, in the shape of studies, grants, lobbies, regional offices, stationery, exhibitions, gossip columns, directives, programs, colloquia, and opening nights. The national genius for money and tables of organization has managed to domesticate the terrifying intuitions of high art into something with which a man can feel safe.

Daniel Terra, a Chicago businessman employed as the government's "ambassador at large for cultural affairs," explained to the newspapers in July that he had spent thirteen months campaigning with his friend Ronald Reagan, who often told him that "his favorite subject for relaxation was the arts." Mr. Terra went on: "Because I had the interest in the arts, he kind of sought me out

at 11 or 12 at night when you could take your shoes off and say, 'The hell with the campaign, let's talk about something that's fun,'"

Under a democratic system of government the dispensation of patronage devolves upon a body of earnest citizens-whether constituted as a congressional committee or a board of directors-who conceive of their obligation as a public trust. Even assuming that they possessed an aesthetic judgment of their own. they could not afford the luxury of indulging it. They bear a responsibility to the taxpayers or the stockholders, to the appearance of racial harmony, to the preferences of the chairman's wife, to the vagaries of the tax laws, and to the pretensions of the city or state in which they do their principal business.

How, for example, could it have been possible for the National Endowment for the Humanities or the Ford Foundation to confer patronage on Ezra Pound? Pound is arguably the greatest American poet of the twentieth century, but what board of trustees could have defended, at least in public, the man's abominable politics? Who could have explained the fellow's anti-Semitism to Senator Claiborne Pell? What would the Washington Post have said about spending the public money on a Fascist and an avowed enemy of the United States in time of war?

The elected or appointed Maecenas learns to think not of art but of a line of goods known as "the arts." It is an important distinction because "the arts" (at least as perceived by congressmen, corporate vice presidents, and the authors of federal guidelines) allow for a bureaucratic shape and a political identity. Art remains too much within the province of the individual, an unpredictable entity that cannot be relied upon to correctly process the forms.\*

"The arts" comprise any and all activity believed to be "creative" in

nature. Thus defined, the arts ha almost as many uses as religion—a specific against crime, boredon and drug addiction; as a palliative to send to slums, hospitals, and depressed coal-mining towns; as an hobby, craft, or innocent amusementhat keeps people off the streets. As is what enough people say is an especially if they have the votes is Washington. Given the easiness of the democratic approach to Parnasus, more than a million people in the United States last year listed the occupation as "artist."

Having classified "the arts" as form of political patronage, the makers of soap and laws can ditribute their largesse under the fa miliar rules. They reward their friends and punish their enemies arrange rites of passage (e.g., a vea on a Guggenheim fellowship i Paris) for the deserving children of the haute bourgeoisie, provide ter porary employment for an alcoholi brother-in-law down on his luck award construction contracts to build ers with a long-standing interest in Thucydides. As blameless in its pur pose as the ASPCA, more fun to tall about than cancer or heart disease as American as mother and the flag the cultural subsidy enjoys an ad vantage over other forms of patron age because nobody would be so impious as to argue against it. "The arts," Richard Nixon once said, his voice trembling with integrity (and his golfing companions cut in for a percentage), "provide the intangible but essential qualities of grace, beau ty, and spiritual fulfillment." Alber Speer or the Mobil Corporation couldn't have said it better.

The Maecenases go among their constituents bearing gifts, their pas sage accompanied by the sweet bu unheard melody of self-applause and if it so happens that their progresses take them among the more affluent and fortunate of their neighbors (i.e., those worthy citizens likely to serve as ornaments on a state or municipal arts council), well, that is a testament to the success of democracy and the wonder of the creative spirit.

This is the first of two articles.

HARPER'S/SEPTEMBER 1981

<sup>\*</sup> For the relevance of this distinction I'm indebted to Ronald Berman, a critic and historian who for seven years served as chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities and who last year published an article in Commentary on the language of federal patronage.

# ISLAND OF INSTABILITY

ıdi Arabia, the Gulf's latest protector

by Frank Gervasi

"N AN apparent rush to replace Iran as the putative "guardian of the Persian Gulf," Saudi - Arabia has become the world's gest buyer of modern Western apons. The authoritative indepenit Lebanese weekly Al-Kifah Alabi reported on March 15 that Saudis' military acquisitions to e have surpassed those of the shah Iran. Since 1973, according to yadh's own figures, the kingdom s spent at least \$63.1 billion on litary hardware and installations. sum out of all proportion to its fense needs, the size of its populan, and the strength of its armed

The country's main supplier over years has been, and continues be, the United States. American licy toward Saudi Arabia seems consist principally in making ailable to the exigent Saudis whater weapons they may want, no utter how complex or deadly, how tentially dangerous to Israel—our ly democratic ally in the Middle ist—or how detrimental to our namal interests.

Conceived in fear of the Soviet reat to the area's oil fields, and orn of a desire to create in Saudi abia an "island of stability" in a ghly unstable region, the policy ninously resembles the one pursued th Iran during the regime of the te shah. Once again, Washington pouring billions of dollars' worth

of advanced weapons into a feudal Islamic society riven by tribal factionalism, industrially and culturally backward, and even less able than Iran to handle the complicated tools of modern warfare.

Indeed, an air of unreality bordering on the irrational hangs over the Saudis' martial extravagance and Washington's complicity therein. The latest demands from Rivadh-to which the Reagan administration has acquiesced—are for some of the most sophisticated weapons produced by American arsenals. They include five AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control Systems) aircraft for delivery in 1985; an unspecified number of conformal fuel tanks, equipment that would greatly enhance the range of the sixty F-15 "superplanes" the Saudis bought in 1978; approximately 350 AIM 9-L Sidewinder airto-air missiles; and seven KC-707 aerial tankers for refueling planes in flight.

This "package" of technologically complex weaponry, valued at roughly \$5 billion, is being submitted to Congress, where it is already producing a long, bitter, and divisive debate. The deal is being challenged by a substantial number of legislators, Republicans as well as Democrats, who doubt the wisdom of providing such "high-tech" armaments to a country notorious for its deficiencies in manpower and skills and dedicated to the proposition that Israel should be expunged from the map of the Middle East in a holy war. Riyadh has repeatedly called for a jihad against the Jewish state. most recently at the Muslim summit conference held in Taif, Saudi Arabia, in January.



ank Gervasi, who served as a foreign corpondent in the Middle East and Europe ring the Thirties and Forties, is the author numerous books, including Thunder Over Mediterranean. HE THREAT to Israel represented by the AWACS alone is real enough. Operating at 30,000 feet, this aircraft is an "eye in the sky" capable of "seeing," or sensing, planes in the air from as far away as 400 miles, the distance from New York to Cleveland. Planned as an aerial battlefield command center, it combines the functions of airborne early warning, battlefield surveillance, and tactical control.

The AWACS incorporate several computerized top-secret electronic and other devices. So jealously has the U.S. guarded its AWACS over the years that only now, in fact, are these aircraft being delivered to our NATO allies to be teamed up with Britain's counterpart, the Hawker-Siddeley Nimrod. While some of the equipment carried in our own Boeing E-3A AWACS will not be included in the AWACS to be sold to the Saudis. the U.S. nevertheless runs a considerable risk that its secrets would be compromised should an AWACS be flown by a defecting Saudi crew to South Yemen or Ethiopia and fall into enemy hands. The possibility that AWACS and other American arms sold to the Saudis might someday be turned against the U.S. should not be overlooked.

That AWACS would be used against Israel in Arab hands is virtually a certainty. Given the aircraft's capabilities, every military move the Lewish state might make would be immediately detected. Israel, for instance, could not mobilize its troops for defense without the Saudis' knowing where and how it was deploying its forces and equipment. This would be bad enough from Israel's point of view, but the AWACS would permit the Saudis to do even more. These advanced radar planes—specially modified, awkward-looking Boeing 707 jets surmounted by 30-foot rotating domes crammed with electronic sensors and communications equipment that are probably unique -can also distinguish the different "targets" or objects they "see": e.g., a fighter plane and a bomber.

Assume for a moment that the Israelis would find it necessary to send up a substantial part of their air

force in the event of the threat of another Arab-Israeli war. A single AWACS, with its twelve radar consoles, will provide Israel's enemies with such detailed information as the Israeli planes' size, speed, and direction. Enemy planes and antiaircraft devices could then "home in" immediately on the Israeli planes. Indeed, the AWACS equipment is so "intelligent" that it could instantaneously determine the best routes for planes and missiles to intercept the Israeli aircraft.

MAJOR Israeli resource in the delicate balance of military power in the Middle East has been the qualitative superiority of much of its arms. particularly of its planes. The kind of information furnished by the AWACS would, of course, wipe out much of this advantage. AWACS can also serve to negate the tactical superiority hitherto demonstrated by Israeli pilots. One of the most important elements in past Arab-Israeli conflicts has been the ability of the Israeli pilots to fly near ground level to elude enemy radar. The AWACS, however, can distinguish between low-flying planes and the background "clutter" that normally shows up on radar screens and helps to provide cover.

The range of AWACS' "vision" can best be illustrated, perhaps, with an American example. Flying at 30,000 feet, an AWACS over Washington, D.C., would detect high-flying planes as far away as Massachusetts, Michigan, South Carolina, and parts of Tennessee and Ohio.

With this in mind, one can see how an AWACS plane, stationed over the Saudi airport at Tabuk, a mere 220 miles southeast of Jerusalem, could easily blanket the entire state of Israel. Far from the actual battlefields, and virtually invulnerable, given the sensitivity of their radar equipment, the AWACS aircraft and the information they provide could well decide the outcome of future Arab-Israeli battles. Israeli military experts with whom I talked recently in Tel Aviv's Shiloah Institute for Strategic Studies estimated that the

AWACS would "multiply the offense strength of the Saudi air force b's factor of three and its defense power by five."

AWACS in Saudi hands would mean, therefore, that the Arabs as whole would have an important ector battlefield surveillance. It is high probable, the Israelis reason, that any Arab state went to war again Israel, the Saudis would make to AWACS available to it, or, at the veleast, the information they gather

Israel's Hawkeye radar planes a no match for the AWACS aircra. Among other advantages, the lat can remain aloft for long period. With aerial refueling, AWACS planhave remained in the air for as losas seventeen hours in U.S. militatexercises.

HAT WORRIES the raelis just as much the projected sale AWACS to the Saudis the prospect that the kingdom's new acquired F-15s will have greater fir power and range if equipped wi so-called Fast Packs. These include auxiliary fuel pods and multiple ejection (bomb) racks, equipmenthat, along with the deadly Sid winder missiles, the Carter administration repeatedly, explicitly, an publicly promised would not be supplied to the Saudis.

On May 8, 1978, in a letter t Senator John Sparkman, then chai man of the Senate Foreign Relation Committee, Defense Secretary Ha rold Brown said, "the plane [F-15 requested by Saudi Arabia will no be equipped with the special feat tures that could give it additiona range. Specifically, the plane wi not have . . . auxiliary fuel tanks that conform to the body of the plane and Saudi Arabian KC-130 tanker will not have equipment for refueling the F-15 ... nor do we intend to set [Saudi Arabia] any other systems o armaments that could increase th range or enhance the ground attack capability of the F-15." (Italic mine.) The Pentagon had previously assured the House International Re lations Committee that the Saudi ai force was "not scheduled to get the

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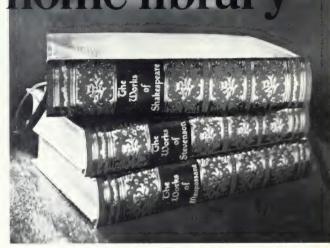
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AIM 9-L [air-to-air] missiles... carried on U.S. Air Force F-15s" and that, furthermore, "an F-15 sale would not lead to the sale [to the Saudis] of E-3A AWACS."

But by the summer of 1980, Brown and other Carter administration offscials were pressing for the additional weapons, insisting that the U.S. r sponse would be viewed in Rivaca as a "litmus test" in shaping a U.S.-Saudi Arabian "special relationship" guaranteeing a steady supply of oil at "stable prices." President Carter. in the midst of his reelection campaign against Ronald Reagan, was pressed by his political strategists to reject the Saudi request lest New York and other heavily populated "Jewish states" be lost. Carter, of course, did exactly that, promising voters only a few weeks before election day that the original Brown commitments to Congress (and to Israel) would be honored.

But while Carter was assuring Israel's friends on the Hill that the Brown commitments would be upheld, senior officials in his administration, in various pilgrimages to Rivadh, were urging the Saudis to "be patient." After the election, they said, the Carter administration would propose the F-15 enhancement sale. and more. This shocking fact has since been confirmed by both Brown and former secretary of state Muskie. In a letter to Democratic senator Carl Levin of Michigan, released this spring, the two officials acknowledged that in the event of a Carter victory the U.S. would have moved ahead with "an early and positive decision" on the Saudi requests shortly after the election. Their conclusions. Brown and Muskie said "were based on the changed situation in the Gulf since 1978.

The Reagan administration, after examining the matter for all of two weeks or so, decided to approve the Saudis' requests, conveniently pleading the need to honor earlier U.S. "commitments." During their testimony before various Senate and House committees, both Secretary of State Alexander Haig and Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger repeatedly referred to the Carter administration's "promises" to the Sau

dis. In their letter to Senator Levin, however, Brown and Muskie had concluded by saying that "The Carter administration indicated its views on this matter to its successors, but neither bound the American government nor precluded the new administration from doing its own evaluation of the proposed sale and reaching an independent decision—which the Reagan administration did."

HE MASSIVE arms sales to Saudi Arabia are intended. of course, to strengthen the regime of the autocratic ruling House of Saud and to help stabilize the entire (highly unstable) region. Washington apparently reasons that an internally calm Saudi Arabia will ensure the West's continued access to Persian Gulf oil. and further America's own interests in its global rivalry with the Soviet Union. The reasoning is identical to the logic that motivated a succession of previous administrations in formulating policy toward Iran, and Washington seems to have given little thought to the possibility that history might repeat itself in the case of Saudi Arabia, Yet the possibility definitely exists.

To begin with, the Saudis do not have the manpower and skills reguired to operate the highly complex equipment they are acquiring, much less maintain it in good working order, Although Saudi Arabia is roughly twice the size of Texas and California combined, it has fewer native inhabitants than Massachusetts. Officially, Saudi Arabia's population is about 7.5 million; actually, however, only about 5 million are Saudis, of whom between 80 and 85 percent are illiterate. The other 2.5 million are foreigners. As a people, the Saudis dislike working with their hands. To man their oil fields and perform the other manual tasks involved in fulfilling the requirements of their new, \$270-billion five-year plan of "modernization, development, and industrialization," therefore, the Saudis are obliged to recruit large numbers of foreign workers.

Militarily, the Saudis are even

worse off. To defend their va 830,000 square miles of desert ten tory they have a volunteer army 45,000 men, a 17,000-man air for a 4,000-member navy, and a Nation Guard of 30,000 men. The arme forces are also obliged to rely heavi on foreign technicians and adviser among them 2,000 Pakistanis and least 1,000 Americans. (When Ira invaded Iran last September, the United States sent to Saudi Arabi four Awacs with about 600 personn to patrol Arabian skies for any threat to the Saudi oil fields.)

The United States has been in volved with Saudi Arabia's defens establishment since the end of Worl War II, but the involvement deepene and broadened in 1974, when Wash ington and Rivadh signed an agree ment for economic and military co operation whereby the United State virtually undertook to guarantee th petroliferous kingdom's territorial in tegrity and political independenc under the House of Saud. The tas of equipping and expanding Sauc Arabia's armed forces fell to Amer can contractors under the supervisio of the U.S. Army corps of engineers A new military academy and head quarters for the National Guard ar being built at Rivadh; naval base are being constructed at Iiddah an Jubail, military air bases at Tabuk in the northwest corner of the cour try, and at Khamis Mushait, in the southwest, near Nairan; while in the northeast, at al-Batin, near the borde with Kuwait, an entire "military city is rising. It is rumored that logisti support for the Saudi army is being organized by the Bendix Corpora tion: the National Guard is being trained by the Vinnel Corporation Lockheed is operating the air-de fense network: Raytheon is provid ing the Hawk missile systems.

O ORACULAR gifts are required to discern the in herent dangers in the policy that the United States is pursuing. Massive sales of armament to the Saudis may help reduce the cost of research and development in volved in producing such highly so phisticated weapons as AWACS and ir

# IN THE HARPER'S TRADITION

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repatriating billions of petrodollars, but in the end are counterproductive. Historically, large-scale infusions of arms have failed to perpetuate in power unpopular authoritarian regimes, especially monarchies. Examples abound of revolutionary colonels bringing down their kings.

Over the years an army of publicists working on behalf of the oil companies and the House of Saud have more or less succeeded in creating the impression abroad that the royal family in Riyadh is in firm control of its country. In fact, the Saudi regime is weak and vulnerable.

The stability of the Saudi monarchy is endangered by widespread corruption in the government, the unequal distribution of wealth and power, the dearth of indigenous skilled technicians and professionals. and the presence in the country of a variety of malcontent groups. These include some 300,000 Shiite sympathizers of Iran's Avatollah Khomeini. hordes of foreign laborers, the numerous orthodox religious zealots. and the restive military. According to Arnold Hottinger, the senior Middle East correspondent for the Neue Zürcher Zeitung, "the regular Saudi army has been ripe for revolution for some time."

Saudi instability was dramatically demonstrated in November 1979 by the assault on the Grand Mosque in Mecca, Islam's holiest of holies. The insurgents, religious zealots numbering several hundreds, held out for tendays in the shrine before Saudi troops could dislodge the rebels from the mosque, its minarets, and the labyrinthine catacombs below the main building, where many had taken refuge.

The drama at Mecca underscored the fragility of the regime, the uncertainty of the royal family's claim on the loyalty of its citizens, and the weakness of the Saudi armed forces, to which we are entrusting F-15s and other sophisticated weapons. It took the combined efforts of the National Guard and the army to recapture the mosque.

In its first "Strategic Survey for 1981," the Lebanese Arab Press Service (APS) said it doubted whether heavy arms shipments from the West would enable Saudi Arabia to defend itself and the Gulf area against the Soviet Union and Arab radicals. "In the only recent military test which the regime has had to undergo," APS said, "the Saudi armed forces demonstrated weakness, incompetent leadership, indecision and foolishness. It would appear that a giant arms package has been placed on shoulders unable to carry it alone. The siege of the Mecca mosque... shook an already nervous Riyadh regime, not into decisive action, but into a display of gross incompetence."

In its latest weekly report, distributed in English as well as Arabic, APS stressed the "negative effect of the arms purchases on Saudi Arabia's internal stability." The strengthening of several army units, the report said, also strengthens "the potential alternative to the rule of the House of Saud"

To forestall a military coup, the royal family has placed princes of the blood in sensitive commands. Prince Sultan, a full brother of Crown Prince Fahd and a sophisticated politician, is minister of defense and in command of the traditional armed forces: army, navy, and air force. Their mission is to defend the country against external attack, but they would seem to be deliberately organized to be ineffectual. And by dividing the military into two competing commands-regular armed forces and National Guard-and playing them against each other, the monarchy hopes to keep the military neutralized. According to APS, "The fears which prevent the regime from forming a more cohesive national defense force seem to have some basis where the air force is concerned."

The royal family's fear of the military's growing strength has caused postponement of plans to institute compulsory military service for all Saudi tribesmen. The delay is deemed significant in view of the fact that only 48,000 troops are available to absorb the immense quantities of sophisticated Western weaponry arriving in the country. Awareness of the army's manpower shortage and insurrectional potential has led to a decision to hire some 10,000 to 20,000 Pakistani mercenaries.

N THE VIEW of Dr. Yehoshank Harkavi an Arabist and forms chief of Israeli intelligence, who Linterviewed at his home in T Aviv, the House of Saud faces an Il certain future. "I don't know exact how it will come to grief." Harka said, "but the present regime cann survive, simply because it is anach nistic. Saudi Arabia is a feudal s ciety in which foreigners do all to work. The Saudis themselves dor do anything. The work is done I Yemenites, Pakistanis, Palestinian and so on. I believe many America fool themselves about Saudi Arabia stability "

Prominent among the "mar Americans" who are deluding ther selves about Saudi Arabia's potenti as a "guardian of the Persian Guli is Secretary of Defense Caspar Wei berger. It was he, after all, who pr vailed on President Reagan, ow some objections from the State D partment, to approve the Saudi arm deal

Clearly, the sale of sophisticate weapons to Saudi Arabia will not er sure the country's stability and a dynace the cause of peace in the Middle East. In reality it will merel intensify an already dangerous armace in the area, and increase the likelihood of war in the very region where stability is needed. Arms sale are no substitute for diplomacy.

The arming of Saudi Arabia would be justified only if it brought th Saudis closer to American policy But they have been eminently uncc operative in every respect. They hav impeded, not helped, the Camp David peace agreements, and continue to finance the terrorist activities of the Palestine Liberation Organization last year to the tune of \$400 million Finally, although the Saudis would have to rely on the U.S. to protec them in the event of a major threa from the Soviet Union, they have steadfastly refused to allow Ameri can forces to be based on their soil

The U.S. has repeatedly acceded to Saudi demands for weapons and has gotten nothing in return. It is time Washington made its own demands and stopped allowing Riyadl to dictate our Middle East policy.

HARPER'S/SEPTEMBER 1983

# THE CASE FOR BANKRUPTCY

nflation's only enemy

by Richard J. Whalen

ATE ONE Friday afternoon this fall, after the financial markets close and the brokers and traders scatter, the low Jones ticker may carry an item ke this: "Armageddon Industries, ne of the nation's largest corporaons, has had its commercial paper harply downrated by credit agencies nd is conferring with its bankers." (That this will mean, quite simply, is at debt-ridden Armageddon has run ut of cash.

Over that weekend, anxious bank-rs will use resourceful White House elephone operators to track down igh officials, and they will impart his message: "Armageddon will go elly up on Monday morning, the anks are very shaky, the unions will aise hell at the layoffs, and the martes will panic—unless Washington loes something right now."

Will the president, the Treasury ecretary, the Federal Reserve chairman, and a handful of powerful concessional committee chairmen have he political wisdom and courage to vithstand such pleas? We may soon ind out, for a major financial crisis, ikely to be marked by spectacular ankruptcies, appears to be headed our way. What Washington should to when it strikes is simple; nothing,

Wall Street is not convinced that Washington has that kind of political vill. That's largely why the Street remains skeptical of the Reagan adminstration's economic program. Impor-

tichard J. Whalen, a private adviser to the leagan administration, is chairman of the Vashington-based economic consulting firm Worldwide Information Resources, Ltd. He s also a limited partner in the Wall Street irm of Bear, Stearns & Co. tant as the Reagan steps have been to date, painful budget cuts, prospective tax reductions, and tighter monetary and credit growth have been insufficient by themselves to dispel Wall Street's fear that larger doses of inflation lie ahead.

Thus, when a major corporation or

bank begins to totter, Wall Street believes Washington will pull back from the brink and uncork yet another inflationary wave of money and credit to bail out all the illiquid companies and financial institutions. Indeed, one banker reportedly told Federal Reserve chairman Paul Vol-



cker recently that if one of his bank's riskier loans goes bad, the government will have no choice but to save his corporate client and his bank. The government needs to deal that welfare capitalist a rude awakening, just as it has been shaking up the rest of the comfortable but unaffordable American welfare state.

If Armageddon is not bailed out and goes bankrupt, there obviously will be at least temporary suffering for some: the company will be reorganized and some of its assets sold. its incompetent executives and hapless employees will be out of work. stockholders will lose their investment, and their creditors and bankers most or all of their money. But, more important, a cleansing wave of fear will pass through the markets, flushing out similar debt-financed excesses that collectively would have produced even worse suffering. This jolt of disinflation will create the sober expectation of more of the same, and prices and interest rates will soon reflect the new trend and the market's perception of it.

If, however, Armageddon proves to have helpful friends in Washington, prompting the Federal Reserve to open the discount window to the bankers and Congress to push through an Emergency Loan Guarantee Act to "protect" all those jobs, financial panic may be averted. But it will be at the cost of a deepening cynical conviction that, in modern America, high inflation is forever.

If the economic system is again short-circuited by political intervention, the peril is that inflation will soon accelerate to hyperinflation, sending prices and interest rates soaring to once unimaginable levels. Would you believe a 35 percent prime rate? It sounds ridiculous. But only a few years ago, the 20 percent prime seemed impossible.

MERICANS today are paying the highest "real" interest rates (adjusted for inflation) there have been for perhaps a century and a half. Bank interest rates have soared to former loanshark levels because lenders demand an extra-large "inflation premium"

to protect themselves. The memory of past inflation inspires apprehension of worse to come. And it blights the future health of our economy by destroying the predictability of future sayings and investment returns.

Chronic, escalating inflation strikes terror in the hearts of bond dealers. A hand is a debt instrument (usually issued in \$1,000 denominations) paying a fixed interest rate and redeemable at its face value at maturity. The market price of a bond varies inversely with the level of interest rates-for example, as rates rise, the prices of bonds issued earlier at lower rates fall. As a result of soaring interest rates, bond prices have plunged in the last two years. So demoralized is the bombed-out long-term bond market, according to traders, that everything bought in the past forty years shows a loss.

It is no secret why key Reagan policymakers regard the bond market as a crucial barometer of the economic climate and of the administration's prospects. The bond market, which is much larger in terms of total investment values than the stock market, is the indispensable source of funds to finance all levels of government and the most credit-worthy U.S. corporations.

If the long-term bond market collapses permanently, as many observers believe it has already, it will be increasingly difficult for us to turn over our astronomical public and private debts. To maintain our precariously balanced debt structure, we may be tempted to follow the example of other nations and resort to deliberate hyperinflation to defraud our creditors.

Credit expansion, which once ebbed and flowed in America with the business cycle, now continues in all seasons, because relentless inflation demands ever larger injections of paper money and IOUs merely to keep the economy afloat. The ratio of debt to GNP is climbing steadily toward the record levels of the late 1940s, when it reflected the huge World War II borrowing overhanging a much smaller economy. Now it reflects the gross inefficiency of the economy, which requires about \$1.65 of debt to finance \$1.00 of

GNP growth, as against perhamance \$1.30 to \$1.00 three decades ago.

ORPORATE America is deladdicted and needs bigg and bigger doses of borroing to keep it going. Thin years ago, corporations require only a nickel of each dollar of n earnings before taxes to service the debts: in the 1960s, they needed cents: but now they must come i with a staggering 45 cents. The rat of liquid corporate assets to short term liabilities-of cash and equiv lents to debts coming due within vear or less-has fallen below 0.6 a record low for the period sing 1945. As their debts have become increasingly short-term, corporation have become increasingly depender on bank financing-and the bank themselves are more illiquid tha ever before. "Finding themselves i a precarious position," writes ecor omist Mark Hulbert, "the banks an operating on the faith that corpora tions will not experience difficulty i servicing the huge debt they owe th

The overextended banks and thei customers are caught in a dilemma they need more inflation to provid liquidity and make their debt but dens tolerable, but inflation destroy the bond markets and prevents thei escaping from the treadmill by bein able to borrow "long."

To restore the markets and encour age investors to buy bonds, the Fed eral Reserve must convince them tha inflation is being brought under control. This, of course, depends largel on the fiscal posture and borrowing requirements of the federal government. When confronted with chronifederal budget deficits and massive Treasury bond issues, the Fed vaunted "independence" disappears

Tradition and expediency dictate that the Fed must provide the markets with the liquidity required to accommodate the Treasury's need and minimize the "crowding-out" of the borrowers. Such "monetizing of debt has been the driving force behind inflation since the mid-1960s

Monetarist economists, led by No bel laureate Milton Friedman (a part me Reagan adviser) and represent-I in the upper ranks of the admintration by Treasury undersecretary ervl Sprinkel, are right to criticize ne Fed for creating too much money recent years. The grossly inflated atistics show an upward trend line s eloquent as the Alps.

But the monetarists tend to beome entangled in arcane technical ad procedural arguments over day--day Fed management that obscure ie demands of our situation of oportunity and peril. Even if the Fed acceeds in restoring a semblance of ability and predictability to closely atched weekly monetary statistics, is technical feat will not in itself lter the inflationary psychology of ne bond market.

Because the root of our inflation political, an act of political will the face of crisis is needed-and here are encouraging signs that this eed is recognized.

ED CHAIRMAN Volcker and President Reagan are trying to coordinate monetary and budget policies for the first ime in a decade and a half. If policy onsensus and political coordination ucceed, we may soon see a turning oint in our economic history.

As Volcker remarks privately, a peculative bet on further inflation ias been a sure thing, and he wants o upset that assumption. He also vishes to shake the complacency of ankers who once worried about their isky loans going bad but who now issume they can shift that burden to Volcker's shoulders if they get into serious trouble.

Ironically, the Fed's ability to proect or punish the imprudent is more imited than they imagine. Created n a much simpler political and financial environment seventy years ago, the Fed now lags behind the competitive and technical forces transforming the financial marketplace. Present-day markets are linked electronically on a global scale. Banks can siphon liquidity from a worldwide pool, lend it, and borrow it again as fast as a telex can print the deals. The regulators are officially responsible, but scarcely in control.

When the New York Federal Reserve Bank's trading desk recently allowed the federal-funds (interbankloan) rate to float freely, as the Fed had indicated it would, bank traders were shocked, "Mother wasn't there," says a top Fed official, "and the monev markets panicked.'

Panic, though frightening, can be therapeutic and profitable. The Rothschilds, who belong to the oldest school of banking, are said to have a family motto that sums up their centuries-old strategy: "Buy to the sound of cannon, sell to the sound of

trumpets."

In the debt-burdened, inflationbesieged U.S. economy, the guns of a major corporation bankruptcy might well cause a liquidity panic in the markets. But markets swing between excesses, and the therapy of fear would quickly yield to the therapy of greed. Institutional money managers, pension-fund trustees, and other fiduciaries would hear a loud cannonade summoning them to buy bonds offering the highest rates of return in U.S. history, rates that some observers think might not be seen again in this century.

In the real world, a whiff of disinflation hangs over glutted markets for overpriced surplus commodities ranging from oil to suburban houses. To translate this trend into financial terms means knocking the inflation premium in half, and that will take more than supply-side rhetoric.

Washington is naïve to suppose it can melt Wall Street's cynicism by offering attractively packaged promises, or even by devising a tax-cut compromise featuring new investment incentives. All this could easily be undone, the Street suspects, and none of it marks an unmistakable end to inflationary business-as-usual.

There is only one certain way for Washington to gain Wall Street's attention and respect, and that is to scare the hell out of the sure-thing inflationary speculators and make them true-believing capitalists again. If Washington refuses the inevitable distress call, breaking the assumed bail-out pattern of more inflation, it will be rewarded with the biggest bond-market rally in history.

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# THE NEWEST CLASS

Yugoslavia's impulse for division

by Richard Wes

■ HE FUTURE of Yugoslavia rests at present with two dead men: President Tito, whose long life and protracted illness ended last year; and Cardinal Aloysius Stepinac, former archbishop of Zagreb, who died in obscurity and under house arrest twenty-one years ago, but is proving in death more dangerous to the communists than he did in life. The reputation of these two men is of more concern to Yugoslavs than the iostling for place of the various nonentities in the present "collective leadership." The case of the cardinal. though the most pressing worry these days, is best understood in the context of Yugoslav politics as a whole, and so I shall start not in Zagreb. the Croat and Catholic center, but in Belgrade, the capital of the Serbs and of federal Yugoslavia.

Tito's tomb in Belgrade does not, like Lenin's in Moscow, display the mummified carcass of the dictator, but it attracts similar coachloads of venerators. Yugoslav publishing houses continue to put out Tito's (almost unreadable) speeches as well as photographic mementoes of his birthplace, early political struggles, trial and imprisonment, his leadership of the Partisans in the war, and his last thirty-five years as an international statesman.

Every shop, café, and public place still carries a picture of Tito; not one carries that of the new "collective leadership." While during his lifetime it was considered respectf to show a recent impression of Ti in presidential gear, he is now ofte shown as a young mechanic, or wea ing round spectacles to disguise hi from the royal police. In spite such artifacts, I do not believe th Tito is turning into a cult figur like Stalin or Mao (before their di grace), or even the Turkish lead Kemal Atatürk, whose busts are sti appearing in hundreds of thousand fifty years after his death.

During his lifetime, Tito enjoye the trappings more than the powe of autocracy. He did not try to sulject his people through terror through spellbinding oratory, or the kind of collective hysteria that wassociate with a Hitler. There wanone of Stalin's paranoia and morbis suspicion, which sent millions to death or slavery. Tito did not, unlik Mao Zedong, regard himself as

prophet or poet. Tito's severest critic is Milovai Diilas, the former disciple and col league who broke with the party is 1954 and started the slow spiritua journey away from Marxism, a jour nev recorded in many books, of which the latest is Tito: The Story fron Inside This acerbic memoir spare no detail of Tito's egoism and vanity how he changed his clothes three of four times a day; abandoned his mistresses and his wives; collected villas, palaces, medals, and works of art in the style of a Louis XIV of France or George IV of England, "Without doubt," Djilas declares



Richard West is a regular contributor to the London Spectator; he has been to Yugoslavia on assignment for Harper's.



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Yet even Diilas, for all his disappointment about a man he once both loved and admired, cannot pretend that Tito was a despot. Tito was tolerant and had no cruelty in his nature, though Diilas attempts to portray these virtues as weaknesses. Since Diilas claims that during this century the communists have themselves done to death 700,000 other communists (most of them in the Soviet Union), his own survival, albeit including seven years in jail. attests to the mildness of Tito's regime. Even today, after the publication of Tito. Diilas is thought to be still at liberty, though he is no longer seen at his favorite cafés, the Metropol and the Moskva.

T IS EASY but misleading to see the clash between Tito and Diilas as one of tyranny versus individual freedom: of socialism versus liberal democracy; of pomp versus plain living. That is how Djilas sees it now. But I was in Yugoslavia when Djilas quarreled with Tito during the winter of 1953-54, and then it seemed otherwise. Before the quarrel, Djilas was on the left of the communist party. My "reactionary" friends, as they proudly called themselves, said Diilas was the worst of the bunch, a rabid ideologue who wanted to build the socialist future now, at whatever cost. Certainly he had led the demand for rapid industrialization, collectivization of agriculture, and a militant foreign policy against the West as much as the East. He was a puritan and fanatic. Once, when he

was minister of information, he printed in Borba a long complaint that two black marketeers had been given prison terms instead of the death sentence; as a result of this they were hanged. (When I taxed Diilas with this, many years later, he said that in the past he was stern but never cruel: small comfort. I guess to his victims ) In 1953 when he was writing a series of articles critical of the party elite-the germ of his later book The New Classhis words were interpreted by the young party militants as the voice of true socialism flaving the bourgeois revisionists. My communist student friends praised Djilas because he habitually wore a cloth cap and an open-necked shirt, and rode in a streetcar instead of a limousine. He was still an idealist, a utopian. He had not vet learned from the Jacobins or the Trotskvites that every revolution produces its Bonaparte or its Stalin.

In fact, the liberalization of Yugoslavia over the last quarter century owes more to Tito than to those. like Diilas, who went into opposition. The most obvious sign of this liberalization is worker self-management, which began soon after the guarrel with Stalin and, at first, was understood in the West as a kind of window dressing to hide the continued control of the communist party. But worker self-management proved a reality; in most of the factories, mines, and service industries (notably tourism), the workers actually make the decisions on pay. policy, and investment, knowing that their own well-being depends on it. Efficient production of something the market wants can produce big bonuses and a wage increase; failure results in bankruptcy from which the staff can expect no severance pay. This explains why, in some of the best-run companies, the workers elect to pay their skilled executives, for example, sales managers, ten or twenty times more than the lowest paid-far more than in Western countries like England. Self-management has its failings; it precludes, for example, the raising of risk capital for investment; it also leads to proliferation of factories manufacturing the same thing throughout the country, so that, for instance, each of the six republics may be producing toothpaste or cigarettes when it would make more economic sense to centralize; but worker self-man agement is not a fraud or character as some outsiders predicted it would be. Even Djilas admits as much and, indeed, now claims to have given the system birth.

The liberalization of Yugoslavi springs from economic change. Be sides self-management, the country has come to depend on large-scal emigration abroad to work and also a large, prosperous self-employed class. In the last twenty-five year hundreds of thousands of Yugoslav have gone as semipermanent exile to Canada, the United States, South Africa, and above all Australia and New Zealand. These are a groun quite distinct from those who flee Yugoslavia after the war and wen overseas as political refugees, though some of the new bunch claim polit ical status. The millions of Yugoslav Gastarbeiter ("guest workers") in Germany and the West have been in valuable to Belgrade as a source of hard currency and as a way of ac quiring skills; the system has also meant exposing the whole of the Yugoslav population to Western ideas and values. As a result, Yugoslavia has long since abandoned any attempt to shield its people from "capitalistic influences"; travel permission is easy to obtain, and censorship is confined to books or newspaper articles critical of the Yugoslav regime: for example, books by Diilas.

Many returning guest workers have used their savings to start up a business in Yugoslavia's flourishing private sector of shops, artisan services, catering, teaching, and translation, as well as the law and medicine. Up at the top end of the Boulevard Revolution in Belgrade-on the other side of the street from where I lived in a student hostel twenty-eight years ago-I counted, within two hundred vards, no fewer than eight shoe stores. five handbag stores, and three glove stores, apart from the many shops selling everything from buckles to sweet Turkish cakes. Plumbers and electricians do very well. So do

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butchers, bakers, greengrocers, and the like. As for restaurant owners, I met a Scotsman, married to a Yugoslav, who kept an excellent inn up in the mountains of Bosnia and is prospering as he had not been able to in central London.

HE CHAIN STORE, that curse of the Western world, is happily absent in Yugoslavia. where small private enterprise is left to provide the goods and services of the economy. While in a country like England national and local taxes are weighted against the self-employed, in Yugoslavia the selfemployed are a privileged group, although naturally they have to provide for their own insurance and pensions. They, as well as the salaried business and professional Yugoslavs, make up the "New Class" that Djilas derided. They also provide the bulk of the membership of the communist party. The old generation of Partisan fighters-many of them from the highlands of southern Serbia, Montenegro, and Bosnia-Herzegovina-have retired and their places have been taken by highschool or university graduates from Belgrade and the other cities. The "working class" of manual laborers forms only about 10 percent of the party and even these are mostly career officials who no longer clock in at a factory. The old Partisans were at first rewarded with jobs in the army and, even more commonly, the police, where they usually acted with bigotry and ferocity; but now even the punitive arm of the party is largely composed of townspeople -careerists, or, if you like, timeservers. All this means a loss of communist principle, a falling-off in idealism: but it also means that the party shares the mentality of the people it governs-a popular culture and set of beliefs not markedly different from those of the West: the same tastes in pop music, TV, sport, and sex.

Some Yugoslavs and foreigners, myself among them, are beginning to turn against Yugoslavia because it is too much westernized. Yugoslavs boast of their traffic jams and will

not give up their cars, though the country cannot afford imported oil. In every town there are gloomy projof high-rise flats-neeling as soon as erected-with all the attendant troubles of loneliness, vandalism, crime, and broken families. The sons and daughters of peasants forget their culture, hundreds of years old. to find in their literature and their movies the hedonism and dubious freedom of what in America used to be called the "sexual revolution." Every magazine has its explicit sexual illustrations. About one in three of the movies on public showing is pornographic. Everything that is trashy about the capitalist system is aned and admired by the Yugoslavs from Penthouse to high-rise revolving restaurants.

■HE COST of this westernization is economic as much as moral, Like Lenin and Stalin before him. Tito believed that socialism would have to be built by the industrial proletariat, the "vanguard of history," in order to free mankind from what Marx called "the imbecility of rural life." Lenin himself proclaimed that Ford, with Marx, was the founder of socialism. The Yugoslav communist party's bias in favor of industry over agriculture was reinforced by a sense of backwardness, of needing to catch up with the industrialized world.

Diilas blames Tito for the downgrading of agriculture under the communists: but few Yugoslavs, in or out of the party, have woken up to the havoc wrought by industrialization. I have already mentioned the had economic and social effects of swelling the population of towns and getting the country addicted to automobiles. These things are evident to the casual visitor, who may not notice the drift away from the countryside. Figures are hard to find but I learned that the rural population has fallen by at least a third over the last twenty-five years. In the 1950s, in early summer, when the shepherds would drive their flocks from the Dalmatian coast into the cool of the Bosnian mountains, one could see hundreds of thousands, even millions, of sheep on the move. Returning r cently to the same route at the sam time of year, I saw flocks of only few thousand sheep; and where on there were only paths were met roads, with police radar traps.

The communists first set out t downgrade the peasants by forcin them into collective farms and limi ing private land to a few uneco nomic fields. Since those early yearmost collectives have been abandone but peasants are forbidden to be come big farmers or employ other than casual labor. Moreover, th hanks will not extend the same kin. of credit to farmers that they give t small factories or, for example, t tourist hotels. Peasants do not enio the social services provided for tow dwellers: they have to pay thei medical bills; and their children ge an inferior education, since teacher want to stay in the towns.

A couple of years back I read in a Yugoslav magazine of a Serbia village whose people were terrorized by the local bears. Curiosity whetted I went with a Yugoslav friend to the village, which was on the top of a mountain, overlooking a gorge where Tito had fought one of his most desperate battles. The road petere out near the base of the mountain so that we had to walk for an how and a half through woods and pastures where deer grazed unconcerned till we got to the Shangri-La village.

of bears.

There certainly were bears in the neighborhood. Packs of wolves used to roam about at the end of the war There were strips of cloth fluttering in the breeze, which I took to be scarecrows keeping the birds from the fruit, until one of the locals ex plained that this was to scare the eagles away from the hen run. Ir spite of the lack of a road, of elec tricity, and, of course, television, this was a thriving and happy village We were regaled at every cottage with stories, bacon and bread, and countless glasses of plum brandy But as for the bears driving the people away-this was a fabrication dreamed up by the magazine to try to persuade the people to leave their village and move to a more convenient place in the valley. The local

mmunist party boss, in whose use we stayed for two nights, comlined bitterly of the bias shown

the government in favor of wnspeople and against the peasts. Yet this village, far from demstrating the "imbecility of rural a," seemed an altogether more ppy, natural, and hopeful place in Belgrade—now just another roous city. And, what is more, the lagers knew they were well off. It even the young people craved bubbles of modern technological

B. Paradoxically, this Yugoslav mmunist party, which claims to eak for the urban proletariat, was ought into power by an army of asant Partisans, 80 percent of om came from the mountains of uth Serbia, Montenegro, and Bosa-Herzegovina; the same kind of ocious peasants who had battled ainst the Turks over the last six

ndred years.

Throughout the Yugoslav countryle you hear stories-most of them ie-of some local man who has en to work as a guest worker in rmany, and brought back to his lage a giant, shining Mercedes, nich, of course, soon rusts and falls bits. It is sad enough that a peast should waste his hard-earned oney on such frippery. But Yuslavs fail to see the deeper irony. the same guest worker had spent s earnings on buying a tractor, or her farm machinery, he could have ade himself a very rich man. Expt for the stony Dalmatian coast. ost of Yugoslavia's soil is rich; the ains of the Danube and Sava rivers we some of the best black earth in urope, and could, if properly nded, make this country a great porter of food.

g a period when prudent countries we been turning back to agriculte. The political implications may distasteful, but three of the most conomically successful countries aw are Uruguay, Argentina, and hile, which have given up protectig industry and turned themselves to exporters of agricultural produce. The results may be cruel in ocial terms; but all three countries ave huge balance-of-payments sur-

Yugoslavia has industrialized dur-

pluses. Yet Yugoslavia, whose agriculture is potentially richer than that of any of them, has been crippled, and almost bankrupted, by its lack of foreign earnings.

O FAR, I have tried to show that Tito's failings-his love of pomp, his craze for industrialization, his admiration for all things Western and modernwere not communist in their inspiration, and the same must be said of his greatest success in making Yugoslavia a proud nation. This country, on the face of it, was one of the least viable mongrel states created by Woodrow Wilson out of the wreck of Europe in 1918, The Serbs, Montenegrins, and Macedonians belonged to the eastern Balkans, and most had suffered under the Turks. They were and are Orthodox Christian or Muslim. The Croats and Slovenes of the north had lived for centuries under the Catholic rule of the Habsburgs. They considered themselves superior to their fellow countrymen of the east.

Yugoslavia, between the world wars, was torn apart by national hatred. Quite apart from the border disputes with Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Austria, and Italy (only Romania has always been friendly), the country was split by enmity between Serbs and Croats. The Serbs from Belgrade had the monarchy, 90 percent of the top police and army jobs, and a sense of being the ruling race. The Catholic Croats considered themselves oppressed in their own country, as Catholic Irishmen used to feel about England. Like the Irish, the Croats resorted to terror-the Ustashi gang, whose victims between the wars included the Serbian King Alexander II. In 1941, when Germany and then Italy occupied and invaded Yugoslavia, the Ustashi took control of an "independent" Croatia and began to massacre the Serbs, communists, gypsies, and Jews. This was where Archbishop Stepinac entered the story.

Archbishop Stepinac—he was not given his cardinal's hat until 1954 did not endorse the Ustashi regime; but he did not go out of his way to

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denounce it. Foolishly, he allowed himself to be photographed in his palace at Zagreb with Ante Pavelić. the Ustashi dictator, and various German officials. He failed to make an outright public denunciation of Ustashi crimes, which included the murder of 300,000 people (to give one of the lower estimates). In private Stepinac did what he could to curb the bloodshed. As early as May 1941 he wrote to Pavelić to protest the murder of 260 Serbs at Glina. He ordered his nuns to care for the children of Partisans. He supervised the care and protection of hundreds of Iews who would otherwise have died in extermination camps.

Nevertheless, Stepinac must take some of the blame for the frightful civil war in Yugoslavia, which went on parallel with the war against the Fascist invaders. This civil war was on a par in ferocity, as well as in numbers killed, with the worst in modern history. It was Tito's supreme achievement that from 1945 till his death he managed to bind together a disparate country and even produce a national Yugoslav

pride.

HIS unification started with brute force. The communist Partisans shot the Ustashi and their Serbian counterparts, the Chetniks, though most of the Chetniks were honest patriots and could not be called either Fascists or racial murderers. After the war, Ante Pavelić escaped to South America but the Chetnik leader Drazha Mihailović was put on trial and sentenced to death. Even shortly after the war ended, when tempers ran high. Tito was not vindictive toward his enemies. In particular he did not want to fall out with Archbishop Stepinac, and tried to get him to back the new regime. When Stepinac refused, Tito tried to get him replaced through the papal nuncio. Only when this failed, and Stepinac persisted in speaking out against the regime, did Tito put him on trial for having collaborated with Pavelić. The trial was unfair but it must be said for the Yugoslav communists that, unlike their comrades to the east, they did not torture and brainwash their prisoners into making staged confessions. Archbishop Stepinac, like Drazha Mihailović in Serbia, made a moving speech from the dock in which he assured the court and convinced most Catholics that his conscience was clean about what had passed in the war. He was sentenced to sixteen years' imprisonment. After a time he was allowed to go back to his native village and died there in 1960.

Thanks to Tito, even the trial and imprisonment of Archbishon Stepinac did not exacerbate Serbo-Croat relations. This may have been because Tito himself was a Croat, from the Zagorie region, whose strange accent accounts for the rumor, prevalent in the war, that he was a Russian or some kind of foreigner It may be that Tito had some residue of Catholic feeling. According to Diilas, a nun was Tito's nurse during his first serious illness thirty years ago, and he was heard to express the un-Marxist view that life on earth may not be the end of all things. At any rate. Tito dealt tactfully with the Catholic Church, allowed it freedom of expression (even to uttering anticommunist statements), and removed irritants such as opposition to theological schools. While the prewar Yugoslav monarchy was at daggers drawn with the Vatican. Tito signed a concordat and got on well with recent popes. After his death, an official of the new collective leadership visited Rome and invited Pope John Paul II to visit Yugoslavia in 1984.

The Yugoslav Catholic Church in return proved loval to Belgrade and ceased its former flirtation with Croat separatism. It has denounced the Ustashi, who still carry on from West Germany and Australia, and have committed several acts of terrorism. When an element of the Croat communist party, backed by university students, demonstrated during the 1960s against what it saw as Serbian hegemony, the church staved out of the quarrel. It is, by its nature, anti-Marxist but it is no longer anti-Yugoslav, and, like the Polish church, had seemed to achieve a position apart from political squabbles.

This year, however, a savage quarrel arose over the grave of Steinac. The president of the presidium of Croatia, Jakov Blazević, is an oleonomunist war-horse whose or claim to fame is that as a your man he was public prosecutor of Stepinac's trial. Like many old politicians, he recently published hememoirs, which include a recapitulation of the trial featuring himself at the wise, just, brilliant attorney an Stepinac as the sly, shifty fascist is the dock.

Stepinac is described, in Staliniprose, as the son of a "kulak" an lickspittle of bourgeois reaction. T make matters worse, Mr. Blazevi went on the radio on January 27 c this year to launch his book an denounced Stepinac, the preser archbishop of Zagreb, the Catholi clergy, and even the laity. He calle the Croat Catholics in Australia th

"dregs of society."

The church responded in kind More than 800 clergymen vote unanimously to defend their presen archbishop. Seven thousand peopl packed Zagreb Cathedral for a me morial service to Stepinac, who nov has a marble shrine covered witl flowers and thanksgiving message for cures he is said to have wrought Pilgrims now visit the shrine of martyr. The authorities, in their turn -using the pretext of falling mason ry—have plastered the cathedral with skull-and-crossbones signs and warn ings: DANGER OF DEATH ENTRANCE FORBIDDEN.

This quarrel between a communis and the church has come at the wors possible time for Yugoslavia, Event in Poland can only remind the Yu goslays, who need no reminder, o the persistent danger of Soviet mili tary might; several minority groups within the country are restive and one, the Albanians, is in revolt; the economy goes from bad to worse and could reach trouble of Polish propor tions. A revival of Croat separatis feeling, tied to the Catholic Church (and possibly backed by the Rus sians), could undo all Tito's good work. God help Yugoslavia if it falls into the hands of people like expublic prosecutor Jakov Blazević.

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#### **Harper's**

### MONEY AND ART

The paradox of patronage

by Paul Theroux

HERE IS NOTHING new about patronage in America, not even the mess, the phonies, the liars, the loophole seekers, the boondoggles, and the system of organized greed that allows anyone who wishes o toy with the arts, or the half-arts, to become a double-dipper. The reason is fairly clear: if you don't get well paid for what you're doing in this country, no one takes you seriously.

In the 1850s, any artist or sculptor worth its salt was in Washington doing saintly portaits or heroic statues of the Founding Fathers, and being paid by the hour. Thomas Crawford, high on the Senate pediment, was carrying out his patron's command: Congress and commissioned him to do a new fresco entitled "The Advancement of the White Race and the Decadence of the Indians"—the one your tourist guide calls "The Progress of American Civilization." Constantino Brumidi, an exiled Italian, spent twenty-five years in Washington inventing Americana in pudgy cherubs and flying garlands for \$10 a day.

Today, literary patronage is pretty much a joke, but it is the sort of hideous joke that, when studied, is full of subtlety and revelation. To take a current example, even my Bostonian sensibility allows me to admit that New York City is no worse than a Siberian labor

camp; and yet one of the paradoxes of patronage is that while no one is very surprised to learn that a Russian dissident has written poetry, plays, or long—even elephantine—novels in the labor camp, it seems to go without saying that the writer in New York needs a creative-writing fellowship in order to attempt his book

Patronage doesn't make you talented, it just makes you richer; however, it seems to be generally accepted that art is expensive and that literature cannot exist without patronage. Where once appeared in books sycophantic expressions of gratitude to patrons, phrased as fulsome or groveling dedications, we now have smug, obliquely boastful acknowledgements saying thanks to the J. S. Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, the Fulbright Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Leonard & Bervl Buck Foundation of Marin County, Yaddo, the Iowa University Writers Workshop, or any of a hundred thousand private or public agencies that have made American writers into spoiled, neurotic, defensive, and even somewhat lazy pensioners, who won't lift a finger unless provoked by the promise of a foundation's tax-deductible grant. Good writing costs money: this attitude is obnoxious and eventually philistine, but it has, on the whole, gone unchallenged. Perhaps the

Paul Theroux's most recent books are The Old Patagonian Express and World's End, published by Houghton Mifflin. reason for this is that there are few writers—indeed, there are few earthlings—who can claim that they have not been touched in some way by the busy attentions of a philanthropoid.

OST LITERARY PATRONAGE is characterized by pomposity, silliness, presumption, greed, insecurity, and the mistaken belief that the imagination is somehow underpinned by money. But there is something else, and I think it is worse: insofar as literature is concerned, there is a desire in both the giver and receiver of patronage for respectability. Each has what the other wants: I become associated with your money, you become part of my writing. This is immensely helpful to our self-esteem. (In the world of commerce it is no different: what happier pair are there than the young, beautiful woman tennis player and the sponsoring cigarette company with its money, its cancerous image, and its shaky advertising?) It seems at times the perfect couple, a vin-vang that fits neatly, balancing its stresses. And yet, has anyone noticed that-in the area of literary patronage at any rate—there are very few success stories?

It is heresy to say that we would probably be better off without it, but dominant in philanthropy is what Professor Robert Merton of Columbia describes as the "Matthew Syndrome." His text is Matthew 25:29—"For unto everyone that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that he hath." If I had to choose a text from the Bible I would opt for Amos 3:3—"Can two walk together except they be agreed?"

Art and money, artist and patron, are wonderfully seen, hand in hand, in the story about Charles Sackville, the sixth Earl of Dorset. Sackville was a great patron, a great host at his house, Knole, and a friend of Dryden, Pope, Prior, and even William Penn. He was in other ways a typically rakish figure of the Restoration court of Charles II, which is to say another lover of Nell Gwyn. He was very rich.

Lord Rochester said that Sackville could get away with anything. That was praise indeed, since we have no record of Rochester having been caught with his pants down, and as his biographer mentions in surpassing detail, they were often down.

Alexander Pope wrote Sackville's epitaph:

Dorset, the Grace of Courts, the Muse's pride, Patron of the Arts, and Judge of Nature, died.

The scourge of Pride, though sanctified or great,
Of fops in learning, and of knaves in state,

One evening, Sackville was with a group a illustrious friends at Knole House. To ente tain them in front of the fire, Sackville su gested that they all write "impromptus"—few brilliant lines apiece—and that Joh Dryden should act as judge. The guests too pens and paper and put their minds to thask, each hoping to win with his own piec. The papers were collected and given to Dr. den, who carefully examined each entry. He then announced Sackville as the winner. The was not so surprising—Sackville, as well a being a patron, was also a considerable poe

Dryden read out Sackville's winning in promptu. It was not a poem. It went as fo lows: "I promise to pay Mr. John Dryden fiv hundred pounds on demand, Signed, Dorset,

But patronage must be by its very natur unsatisfactory, or else there wouldn't be s many disgruntled parties on both sides. Th French statesman has a fit of generosity an then howls, "I'ai fait dix mécontents et u ingrat!" Doctor Johnson disagrees, saying, "I not a Patron, my Lord, one who looks wit unconcern on a man struggling for life in th water, and when he has reached ground, er cumbers him with help?" Nonsense, says Herr Ford: "Give the average man something an you make an enemy of him."

#### The patron saint

T is impossible to separate philanthrop from patronage; they are, together, the eleemosynary texture of any well-intentioned foundation. And there have bee foundations in our republic almost from it inception. Ben Whitaker argues in The Foundations that the first one in the United State was probably the Magdalen Society, which was started in Philadelphia in 1800, "to ameliorate the distressed condition of those unhappy females who have been seduced from the path of virtue, and are desirous of returning to life of rectitude." Apparently there was a short age of candidates; it was eventually reorganized into a foundation to assist schoolchildren

Mr. Whitaker is comprehensive in his treat ment of foundations and lists among other "the Robbins Fund of Chicago with its asset of \$8. The James Dean Fund...to provide for the 'delivery to the Boston Light Vessel o one copy of each of the principal Sunday news papers published in Boston.' A Horses' Christ

as Dinner Trust"—in Kansas—and "a founation in Latin America devoted to the eportation of foreign bull-fighters. A Science iction Foundation has recently been started a Britain, where the Scientology Foundation already active, and the Osborne Foundation ow offers to pray for you for £2 (\$4) a onth." We also have a Lollipop Foundation at two foundations to preserve prairie chickens. But prairie chickens are no laughing matr, nor are other desert fauna. In 1980, the uggenheim Foundation awarded one of its sllowships to a man in order to assist his udy, "The Social Ecology of Free-Ranging ovotes."

This is a far cry from Dr. Johnson's having find subscribers to his dictionary, and he as so cross about Lord Chesterfield's cold oulder that he rewrote his imitation of years.

Yet think what ills the scholar's life assail, Toil, envy, want, the Patron, and the jail.

What motives impel the philanthropoid to ive his money away? Mr. Whitaker lists dozas, but some are more important than others, here is the religious emphasis—almsgiving, hich may have evolved from the tradition of making a sacrifice to propitiate fate or hostile pirits, together with a more material fear of

the malevolence of the poor." There is tax deduction, but this is recent. No deduction was allowed for charitable gifts prior to 1917. There is simple kindness; and complicated kindness, motivated by a mixture of idealism, pride, and the wish to be loved. "At least 90 percent of all existing foundations today," Mr. Whitaker remarks, "perpetuate the donor's name"—not only Ford, Carnegie, and Stanford, but also all recent presidents and members of their cabinets-the John Volpe and Maurice Stans foundations are but two of very many. There is the selfish motive, to which Will Kellogg, the cereal tycoon, admitted: "I get a kick out of it [giving to children]. Therefore I am a selfish person and no philanthropist." There is real malice. Mr. Whitaker cites the case of the American who "established the fund to help French peasants to dress up as matadors or hula dancers, to prove his thesis that there is no degradation to which French people will not stoop for money." There is also the straightforwardness of James Buchanan Duke, who founded the Duke Endowment. He said, "People ought to be healthy. If they ain't healthy they can't work, and if they don't work they ain't healthy. And if they can't work there ain't no profit in them." From such down-to-earth sentiments came the Duke University Medical School.

"Is not a Patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help?"



Paul Theroux MONEY AND ART One of the subtlest and most paradoxical points Mr. Whitaker makes in The Foundations regards patronage between enemies, or gift-giving out of suspicion. It is the hectoring of one group on another's uneasy conscience, the sort of guilt-inspired blackmail that frequently creates an even greater suspicion between the races in the United States. In this connection, Mr. Whitaker quotes Lévi-Strauss's Elementary Structures of Kinship. Small nomadic groups of Nambikwara Indians in the Brazilian jungle

are in constant fear of each other and avoid each other. But at the same time they desire contact... and from being arrayed against each other they pass immediately to gifts; gifts are given, but silently, without bargaining, without any expression of satisfaction or complaint, and without any apparent connexion between what is offered and what is obtained.

#### Great expectations

HAT "CONSTANT FEAR" and wary, circumspect behavior, that sense of mutual suspicion, puts me in mind of an escaped convict suddenly confronting a child in a foggy, marshy graveyard, and the following dialogue:

"You know what a file is?"

"Yes. sir."

"And you know what wittles is?"

"Yes, sir."

After each question he tilted me over a little more, so as to give me a greater sense of helplessness and danger.

"You get me a file." He tilted me again. "And you get me wittles." He tilted me again. "You bring 'em both to me." He tilted me again. "Or I'll have your heart and liver out." He tilted me again.

And so begins the relationship between patron and recipient in what is certainly the greatest novel about patronage, Dickens's *Great Expectations*. The complex motives of both giver and receiver have never been more cunningly delineated than in the surprise and plot shifts of this novel. George Orwell called it "an attack on patronage," but if it were as simple as that one would only need to list its abuses. Dickens was at pains to demonstrate the paradoxes.

After one has read the novel, one quickly sees how, like Pip, one has misapprehended the source of his funds, and it is possible to feel a sympathetic sense of victimization. Certainly, Pip is a snob, but after seeing his humble origins we understand how glad he is to

receive the grant of money that liberates hi from the blacksmith-shop apprenticeship an the pretensions of his provincial town. The story is of Pip's rise and fall, and rise again As a child, he is summoned to the house of Miss Havisham and commanded to play with the girl Estella. Miss Havisham urges Estell to break his heart; Miss Havisham is reputed wealthy. Pip longs to be rich himself and helieves that his ambiguous welcome at Mis Havisham's will eventually make his fortune the also longs to be a gentleman, as he tell the kindly Biddy, and confesses that his wis to be a gentleman has something to do wit Estella.

Shortly after a fruitless plea for patronage Pip is visited by the lawyer laggers, who in forms him that his expectations have bee fulfilled: someone wishes to give him a grea deal of money, clothes, a tutor, a new life-i short, wishes to make him a gentleman. Pip i delighted; within a few pages he is a ragin. snob; a few pages more and he is dreaming of becoming a philanthropist. His reflection i like a paraphrase of Andrew Carnegie's Th Advantages of Poverty, Pip feels a "sublim compassion" for the churchgoers in his village for their low state and their mean lives. Bu he is rich now and "I promised myself that would do something for them one of these days, and formed a plan in outline for bestow ing a dinner of roast-beef and plum-pudding a pint of ale, and a gallon of condescension upon everybody in the village." (One advan tage of charity. Carnegie said, was that it al lowed the rich to "find refuge from self questioning.")

Pip assumes that Miss Havisham is his benefactress, and in that reverie of philan thropy quoted, he remembers the convict he met, the brief friendship, and he concludes that his comfort is that the felon has beer transported and is probably dead. Pip is consoled by the thought that this foul creature is out of the way and that he, Pip, is in no danger of further contamination.

It is not necessary to explain how Pip squanders his money in London, preens himself dispenses charity, and is jilted by Estella. Suffice it to say, he is in for a shock, for his patron turns up. It is, much to Pip's embarrassment, the convict Magwitch.

Magwitch is a fascinating character. He is the unwelcome aspect, the unacceptable face of patronage. And he is like many patrons, many starters of foundations. Like Carnegie, he made his pile far from his native land; like Guggenheim and others, he is a bit vague about his methods; like Joe Kennedy, he is rather sanctimonious; and like James Buchanan Duke, his syntax is somewhat twisted. He is also the soul of generosity; he has not forgotten the kindness that was done to him so many years ago by the boy who gave him "wittles" and a file to free him of his manacles. It is another characteristic he shares with philanthropoids—he has a very long memory. Lastly, he passionately craves respectability. Magwitch's victory is that he has turned Pip into a gentleman—through patronage—funneling the funds through the lawyer Jaggers, without the young man knowing. Pip is appalled and ashamed.

His perplexity arises not from any scruple that he has been unworthy, or that he is a spendthrift and a snob, but rather that his patron is unworthy, an ex-con, a spendthrift, and a vicarious snob. Magwitch, in Pip's eyes, has "a savage air that no dress could tame," he sits like a lout, he eats with a jackknife and wipes it on his leg to clean it. Pip's main objection is that he does not want to be the vindication of Magwitch's obsessive sacrifice. The patron has dirty hands. He has no right to be proud of Pip. Pip tells his friend Herbert Pocket that Magwitch must be stopped in his giving. Herbert says, "You mean that you can't accept—" And Pip replies, "How can I?... Think of him! Look at him!"

It is the moment in literature that most accurately mirrors that moment in history when, for many writers, the CIA's clumsy figure (savage air, jackknife, dirty hands) appeared behind the dignified façade of the Congress for Cultural Freedom.

#### Intellectual knighthood

TO ONE CAN TRULY enjoy patronage unless it boosts his self-esteem. Pip's self-esteem was in for a knock as soon as it was revealed that his money was from an ex-convict. Patronage always works best when both patron and recipient are held in mutual esteem, because each has what the other lacks. So often, it is the uneducated millionaire who founds a university; the scarcely literate one who starts a library; the artless tycoon who patronizes the artist. Here, the philistine and the publican are happily paired. It is not merely that the patron wishes to become respectable and artistic through his gift; the recipient, too, gains respectability by association with his patron. If the patron is distinguished enough, the actual money may be regarded as no more than a detail.

The Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, in its *Annual Report* for 1965–66, claimed that since its awards "year after year were seen

to be based on rigorous professional standards, the informed public came to realize, in the words of one observer, that a Guggenheim Fellowship constitutes a sort of 'intellectual knighthood.' Thus the Foundation has gradually assumed a role in the validation of intellectual excellence that is quite as significant as its role in the provision of material assistance." Prestige matters. Charles Sackville's patronage may have been no more than a spirited evening at Knole House, but Sackville's friendship was an affirmation that you were of the elite, and if you were a poet, a great poet.

great poet.

On the whole, failures in patronage are not widely publicized, and it is the "intellectual knighthood" conferred on recipients that is stressed, or, as the current report of the Guggenheim Foundation has it, "The Fellowships are awarded to men and women of high intelectual and personal qualifications who have already demonstrated unusual creative ability in the arts." It makes it seem like an award for achievement, rather than a sum of money intended to help start or complete a project. It signals arrival and is, for many, the beginning of self-esteem.

Consider three statements:

-Receipt of the fellowship gave me new confidence in my work and in my choice of writing as a profession.

—This was the first time my work had been given credibility by an outstanding outside source. The results were that my family, my colleagues within the local community, the region and the state accepted that I was a serious writer—and that it was all right to be that.

—Often the result of such a grant is intangible—it has more to do with your own psychological attitude, toward your work and toward the society in which you're living.

These comments are from the report circulated by the National Endowment for the Arts. their "Literature Program Follow-Up on Creative Writing Fellowship, 1972-1976." The report states, "A large number of writers specifically commented on the added 'prestige' and 'recognition' brought to them and their work by the award." These fellowships were not given on the basis of need; the only considerations were "the talent of the writer and the quality of the manuscript submitted." The greatest boast in this report is that after having received a National Endowment fellowship, nearly half of the fellows (129 out of 293 surveyed) went on to secure other fellowships or grants-twenty-two Guggenheims, four Rocke-

"Magwitch is a fascinating character. He is the unwelcome aspect, the unacceptable face of patronage." Paul Theroux MONEY AND ART fellers, four Fulbrights, and so forth. It is almost as if the National Endowment for the Arts is a means by which a writer may attract further patrons, the first rung on the ladder of

patronage.

So, what about those American writers whose applications were turned down by the National Endowment for the Arts? We have no way of telling, because the report did not cover unsuccessful applicants. But wouldn't it be interesting to know if the refusal of a grant was such a blow to an aspiring writer's self-esteem and so damaging to his prestige that he abandoned writing? And what if it made no difference at all? To say that half your respondents have become patronage pensioners after receiving their first grant does not impress me, but only confirms my view that grantsmanship is often a game that is played at the peripheries of art. There is a Grantsmanship Center in Los Angeles that conducts "grantsmanship classes" and publishes, among other titles, The Guide to Corporate Giving and Ten Steps to a Million-Dollar Fund Raiser. Unsuccessful applicants for the National Endowment might well consider one of these classes or gold-digging textbooks.

HE BRITISH equivalent of the National Endowment for the Arts is the Arts Council of Great Britain. Until last year, the Literature Panel felt it was, in the words of one director, "ungentlemanly" to ask how the money had been spent by the writers who received Arts Council patronage. For about fifteen years, no one knew; and then last year a report was commissioned. But for this unsuccessful applicants were questioned. The chairman of the Literature Panel, as a result of the report's findings, concluded that it made little difference whether a writer received a grant or not. That is, patronage was not crucial to any of the writersunsuccessful and successful applicants for patronage seemed indistinguishable in their final results (though, having read the report, I must confess that the unpatronized ones sounded very aggrieved). The Arts Council has decided to abandon grants to writers, except for "two or three writers of outstanding ability in exceptional circumstances."

"The books we were subsidizing seemed very dull." the chairman told me. "And we have come close to producing a breed of poets who can't write poetry without a grant." The Arts Council is happier subsidizing magazines and small publishers, and the chairman of the Literature Panel confided that what he would like to see is a very large state publishing

house, something like the National Theatre of the Royal Opera House. In any case, individua patronage to writers is more or less at an end in Britain, and this is largely because of a report that asked unsuccessful applicants whether patronage mattered to them. "We couldn' point to a *Ulysses* having been written," the chairman of the Literature Panel said glumly suggesting that a masterpiece might have vindicated his bursaries.

It is a wonderful example, because the writing of Ulysses-in fact, the life of James Joyce-superbly shows how patronage can work, provided the patron is very rich and the recipient is a genius. But Joyce was also a great spender, His biographer Richard Ellmann wrote that Harriet Weaver's benefaction "did not make Joyce rich; no amount of money could have done that; but it made it possible for him to be poor only through determined extravagance." Miss Weaver provided Joyce with a stipend in 1918. This continued for the next twenty-three years. He had dozens of other patrons, and a Civil List grant, and a sort of bloodhound in Ezra Pound, frantically sniffing out new patrons. Joyce's biography (written with the help of a Guggenheim fellowship) is filled with anecdotes of handouts, grants, and stipends, and with sorely pressed patrons and patronesses. Joyce was not only a master of English fictional prose-he could also write an effective letter beseeching a potential patron for funds.

Mrs. Harold McCormick, née Edith Rockefeller, was his patroness for a time. She was also Jung's patron, and what seems to have ended her relationship with Joyce was her insistence that the Irish novelist be psychoanalyzed by Jung-at her expense. Joyce refused, and got no more money from Mrs. McCormick. It might have happened anyway, since Jung's treatment of another of Mrs. McCormick's artists (the composer Wolf-Ferrari) was to advise the patroness to withdraw her subsidy. Cut off without a penny, the composer "pulled himself out of dissipation and inertia" and began to compose music again. Even after Mrs. McCormick stopped paying Joyce's bills. Joyce wrote her asking if she would reconsider and take him aboard—she was reputedly the richest woman in Zürich. But silence was her stern reply. Joyce secured other patrons, and his revenge on Mrs. McCormick was in putting her in the brothel scene in the Circe episode of Ulysses; she is the Honourable Mrs. Mervyn Talboys, who appears as a rich, sadistic horsewoman, "in amazon costume, hard hat, jackboots cockspurred, vermillon waistcoat, fawn musketeer gauntlets with braided drums, long train held up and hunting crop with

thich she strikes her welt constantly"-she reatens to bestride the cringing Leopold Bloom and flay him alive.

Joyce did well out of his patrons; and his atrons had the satisfaction of knowing their an was a genius, even though they hardly nderstood what he wrote. But Joyce, like all vriters, did not want a patron half so badly as e wanted a paying public. In his lifetime, oyce's public was not large-his royalties zere lamentably thin, and, like Stephen Dealus, he owed money to everyone.

Would James Joyce have gotten a Guggeneim fellowship? It is idle to speculate, but t is certain that a one-year fellowship would ave done him little good: his talent was too ast, his working method too slow, his tastes oo extravagant for a one-year fellowship. He lid not require prestige. And as for the limitaion of time-what is one year, or five, to someme writing Ulysses? It seems almost as if later-day patrons are determined to encourage he small book, the small talent, the slight imbition. Nationality aside, Joyce would probibly not have applied for any grant. It was is inheritors—his biographers and critics and nasters of the footnote-who made a living rom foundations, in his name, and who put one in mind of barnacles on the Titanic.

Nathanael West applied for a Guggenheim,

and was turned down. Henry Miller had the "Would James same experience and was so embittered by it that, in a note to what would have been his Guggenheim project, The Air-Conditioned Nightmare, he listed in that book the loonysounding projects of the successful applicants. And notice: he wrote his book all the same. So did West, So would lovce have done, It is possible to feel, when reading a mediocre novel by an author who has received patronage, that instead of a check through the door. the cause of literature would have been better served by a visit from The Person from Porlock.\*

Joyce have gotten a Guggenheim fellowship?"

#### Doctors of fiction writing

▼ VEN SO, we are dealing with very small sums. For the period 1977-1978, 10 percent of the money awarded by major foundations was earmarked for the humanities, and of this only 2 percent was used in activities classified as language and

\* See Coleridge's preface to "Kubla Khan" or the Robert Graves poem, which ends:

O Porlock person, habitual scapegoat, Should any masterpiece be marred or scotched. I wish your burly fist on the front door Had banged yet oftener on literature!



Paul Theroux MONEY AND ART literature. Of the 272 Guggenheim fellowships awarded this year, only eight were given to writers of fiction. The National Endowment for the Arts fellowships are currently \$12,500 for "creative writers," and state art agencies' grants are much less.

This is not the whole story, however. It is impossible to calculate the numbers, but I would venture to guess that the greatest amount of patronage extended to writers is that of colleges and universities; that is, the creative-writing section of the English department, in whose precincts we find the writer-inresidence, the visiting writer, the professor who writes when the spirit moves him, and the scribbling students. The postwar phenomenon of creative writing as a subject, which allowed a graduate student not to study the Bildungsroman but to write one of his own. gave rise to a system of continuous patronage that will be with us for some time. It is, in fact, self-perpetuating,

The system began at Iowa and Stanford, and it worked this way. A person who wished to write a novel registered for a postgraduate degree. He had a teaching fellowship or a scholarship to help him along. Like other master's and doctoral candidates, he had a supervisor, who was probably a novelist. He wrote his novel. The novel was submitted

to the usual committee and, if it was a proved, the candidate earned his degree. It time, a blurblike plot-summary of the nov appeared in the leaden pages of Dissertatio Abstracts. And the successful candidate, no a Doctor of Fiction Writing with a dissert tion-novel under his belt, developed the schizophrenia that afflicts anyone who is hear ily patronized: half-academic, half-novelist-Dr. Jekyll in the classroom, Mr. Hyde at the typewriter. Yes, I do believe the potion of patronage is that strong.

Although many such graduates have gon on to become professional writers, many mor have joined universities and done all the thing that academics do: taught classes, grade papers, and demanded tenure. Their novel may never have been published, but academ ically at least they have passed muster bearing the person a graduate degree.

George Gissing's New Grub Street was neve like this; moreover, the very situation of th creative-writing section caused a particula kind of novel to be written, something quit different from what had been written before the university novel. The 1930s and '40s ha given us the "Hollywood novel" for precisely the same reasons—Hollywood offered a kin of patronage to practically every major American novelist of those decades except Heming



way; and William Faulkner continued to write movie scripts into the Fifties. In fact, Faulkner wrote the script for Land of the Pharoahs (1953) after he had received the 1950 Nobel Prize for Literature. The main distinction between the teacher-novelist and the scriptwriternovelist is the nature of the patron. The university is Maecenas; Hollywood is Magwitch.

◀HE EFFECT of this creative writing on the profession of letters in the United States has been profound. It has changed the profession out of all recognition. It has made it narrower, more rarefied, more neurotic; it has altered the way literature is taught and it has diminished our pleasure in reading-books must be worthy (goodbye, Treasure Island), books must be seminar fodder (have a good day, Kim), books must be symbolic (farewell, Diary of a Nobody); and hello to every pompous piece of fiction that makes literaturelike noises. I would bet that the decline in humorous writing and social satire can be directly traced to the rise in grantsmanship.

Most of all, university patronage has spelled the decline of book reviewing in the United States. After the foundations delivered novelists into the arms of universities, there was no need for anyone to engage in the habitual tasks associated with the profession of letters. A campus of creative writers does not mean that the local newspaper will be lively with literary journalism; it means its opposite. Book reviewing, the literary essay, the feuilleton—all of these went out the window when university patronage came in the door; and a sharp, and I think unfair, distinction came to be drawn between the literary man and the literary journalist.

We have only a handful of reliable book reviewers in this country, which is a pity; but it is a far greater pity that reviewing is seen to be so despicable a labor that it is done, when it is done at all, by nonentities on the Entertainment page. What happens to the rest of the newspapers? They get by on syndicated reviews, "notices," and mentions cobbled together from the plot-summary on the book jacket.

The writer-in-residence is perhaps right in refusing to review a book; why should he bother, on his salary? And yet when such a person's own book appears, he may object to its thin treatment, and with some justification. Patronage is odd that way. It prevents a person from doing the very thing that may free him from patronage; it is nearly always at odds with the kind of commercial considera-

tions that make patronage unnecessary. In a world of patrons, who needs large advances? Who needs literary journalism? Who needs to be professional? When patronage is extensive, who indeed needs readers?

There is a sort of Malthusian effect in literary patronage; it has altered the nature of readership, the way books get written, and has changed the notion of the literary profession -in fact, taken away so many of the writer's duties that writing has almost ceased to be a profession. In my reading on this subject, the strongest feeling I have had is that anyone in America who aspires to authorship finds it very hard to admit this except on an application. It has less to do with prevailing philistinism than the plain truth that in our society you are measured by how much money you make. Writers do not make very much, on the whole, and have to look to patronage for justification and the respectability that is money's equivalent. I should add that it is possible to be so respectable as a novelist in America that the act of writing a book review or anything else begins to appear somewhat distasteful, and literary journalism is regarded as a blow to one's prestige.

Patronizing libraries

HAVE MOVED from the general to the particular. I cannot speak about theaters, opera companies, or orchestras. I think there are arts that can survive only with a great deal of patronage. The sculptor, the painter, the composer will always need patrons of one sort or another; but one can often see the patron's taste reflected in their work. The performing arts prosper under patronage, but there is a Malthusian dimension to this as well. In the ten years before 1978, with the assistance of the National Endowment for the Arts, opera companies grew from twenty-seven to forty-five; professional symphony orchestras from fifty-eight to 110; professional dance companies from ten to seventy; and legitimate theater companies from twelve to fifty. The patronage that makes them multiply has to keep them alive, which makes the patron a bit like a rabbit breeder. These figures were given in an article by Waldemar A. Neilsen, author of The Big Foundations, who argues that organized philanthropy "has become Calvinist, conscience-ridden, technocratic and bureaucratized. Most of all it has become painfully infected with social scientism. It has contracted a bad case of what could be called sociologist's foot."

Neilsen describes the "new patrons." They

"I prefer to think of Dr. Johnson saying, 'I never knew a man of merit neglected.'" Paul Theroux MONEY AND ART

are three: the consumer public; large business corporations; and government. The National Endowment for the Arts funds have already been reduced by the present administration, but as Neilsen points out, there are worse things than indifference. There is, for example, meddlesome interest and political opportunism-"the destruction of the WPA's Federal Theater Project in New Deal days by a witchbunting House Committee: the successful demand by Senator Joseph McCarthy in the 1950s for a purging of U.S. Information Service libraries overseas of 'subversive' literature, and the powerful effort by the Nixon White House to politicize the programming of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.'

And Neilsen warns also of a subtler effect, "the creeping advent of an 'official culture' . . . as a consequence of supporting the arts with Government money. By an insidious process, bland traditionalism and conformist official standards gradually penetrate the cultural at-

mosphere.

That is what a stockbroker would call the "downside risk." I prefer to think of Dr. Johnson saying, "I never knew a man of merit neglected. It was generally by his own fault that he failed of success. A man may hide his head in a hole: he may go into the country, and publish a book now and then, which nobody reads, and then complain that he is neglected. There is no reason why any person should exert himself for a man who has written a good book: he has not written it for any individual. I may as well make a present to the postman who brings me a letter..."

And I prefer to reflect on Joyce outspending the almost bottomless purses of his patrons; and go on believing that a reduction in patronage to individuals might mean fewer mediocre novelists and more money for institutions.

ONEY TO WRITERS will not give us any masterpieces. That thought should fill us with joy, for the imagination has no price; h re at last is something that cannot be bought. But money is not useless. It matters to the performing arts, and to some painting and sculpture. It is essential to literature, but in a way that is seldom seen-in the old Carnegie way of funding libraries. We live in an age when libraries are somewhat scorned as remnants of a poorer makeshift past, when the self-taught spent hot afternoons inhaling the dust from brokenbacked books. We have come to think of libraries in the way we think of bus stationsthey are places where old men congregate to get warm in winter.

It is not odd that we associate public I braries with a kind of destitution. For the pas twenty years they have been growing steadil poorer, Many have closed. The neighborhoo library is pretty much a thing of the past But why should money be given to individual and denied to institutions? I have tried to show how patronage can be harmful to writers and to society at large. It seems to me that libraries, magazines, and small publishers ar the most deserving of patronage. It is no merely that they provide the greatest good for the smallest outlay, but that without then there would be no profession of letters. They are also accountable for what they receive In scrutinizing the reports of a score of large foundations and agencies I could not find one that held its patronized writers accountable for their grants. That is the most laughable aspect of patronage today: individuals are paid for believing they are writers, not for writing. The idea of writing is peculiarly well suited to what at times seems a confidence trick. What person could, without playing a note, claim he was a violinist and expect patronage?

Perhaps the most misleading notion that patronage has given us has to do with the nature of art itself. We have come to see art as something in delicate health, very expensive, very special, the sort of thing that requires the practitioner to leave the dishes in the sink, neglect the children, take the year off, or get divorced. We imagine that it exists only in rarefied circumstances—it is apart from life; it is something that happens in smoke-filled rooms or in places like Yaddo or Iowa City. So patronage, cruelly, has separated art from life, writing from working, and has undermined far more than it has built up.

But of course there is little real damage that patronage can do-nothing permanent. Art is not such a frail thing as it has often been made out to be, nor so badly in need of moneyed well-wishers. It flourishes in the most unlikely places, even in complete adversity, in Siberian labor camps. Patronage does have its opposite in the totalitarian denial of cultural freedom, the determination by the state to silence the artist. Dictators are great patrons of those they approve—this alone should make us suspicious of patronage-but even so, when they declare war on their true artists they always lose. Far more interesting than our inability to create art with money is the fact that no one, not the rankest philistine, the silliest know-nothing, the most paranoid senator, preacher, commissar, or jailer, has figured out a way to destroy it with money.

HARPER'S SEPTEMBER 1981

## PANIC AMONG THE PHILISTINES

The literary vulgarians

by Bryan F. Griffin

T WAS ALL OVER, From Havelock Ellis and Anaïs Nin to Shere Hite and Philip Roth, from Chatterley's loins to the dissonant chord, from Pablo and Papa and Alice B. o Miller and Mailer and Masters and Johnon, the names and noises and postures and isions that had defined the bizarre cult of the afantile for the greater part of the spiritually tagnant century had suddenly become targets or general intellectual ridicule and symbols f protracted cultural farce. By 1980, even he most persistent apologists for the old reime-the philosophical beneficiaries of the ormer establishment, the third-generation imtators and the elderly camp followers-had egun to suspect that their game was finally ip, and that the giddy era of aberrant art and hought was about to be kicked aside as othing more than that: one more aberration n the affairs of men, one more futile deviaion from the human aim, one more wasted hance, one more century—a crucial one, this ime-frittered away by half-souled harlequins lisguised as full-hearted heirs of Athens. In ts eleventh hour, Western culture had been ed up the garden path, and abandoned in the prambles, one more time.

"There is a law of neutralization of forces," aid Lowell, "which hinders bodies from sinking beyond a certain depth in the sea; but in he ocean of baseness, the deeper we get, the asier the sinking." What is manifestly true of the individual spirit is just as true of the

occasional corpse of national character, or intellect, or culture (the crucial difference being that the individual must forever recall and enclose his iniquity within his remorse, whereas a people is always in a position to make itself clean again through its children, be they actual or spiritual: the individual regenerates and completes himself by making his own amends, but a civilization worthy of the name must assign to the sons and the daughters the task of atonement, in order that the bad may weaken, and the memory of the good accumulate, to survive long after the civilization itself has surrendered).

So it was with the unpleasantly decrepit body of the Anglo-American cultural establishment. The awful pallbearers of the century's shabby legacy—the leering old critics and the ghastly old novelists and the obsequious executive editors and the finger-snapping academics and the sleazy book clubs and the computerized publishers-had guided their cadaverous vessel over their private "ocean of baseness" for so many tedious years that they could no longer remember where they had come from, or even why they had set out on the torturous voyage in the first place. Unwilling to withdraw, however awkwardly, from the public scene (which would have been the first measure in the long procedure of atonement and repair), and unable to return to port, the shattered crew resolved to embrace the rising tides of outrageous fortune

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by throwing a series of diversionary tantrums.

The ensuing burlesque was not a pretty thing. All exhibitionism—physical, emotional, intellectual, or moral—is by definition vulgar, but the last literary debauch of the worn-out cultural government was, at least in its final stages, an unusually and deliberately squalid affair. By exposing their mounting mental and emotional hysteria to public view, the literary strippers hoped to reestablish the essential distinction between "art" and the rest of the culture; and "art," in those mad times, was the stuff that was just a little more prurient and a little uglier than everything else.

The novelist E. F. Benson (among many others) had imagined the shape of 1980 back in 1919, as he traced the deadly shape of a fictional literary opportunist who had stumbled over an ancient evil and mistaken it for "a

new aspect of the world":

Where before the enchantment of life moved him, he felt now only the call of putrefaction and decay. The lethal side of the created world had become exquisite in his eyes, and the beauty of it was derived from its everlasting corruption, not from the eternal upspringing of life. Lust, not love, was the force that kept it young, and renewed it so that the harvest of its decay should never cease to be reaped.

The mind of Benson's literary jackal had become "a mirror that distorted into grotesque and evil shapes every image of beauty that was reflected in it, and rejoiced in them; it seemed to him that all nature, as well as all human motive, was based upon this exquisite secret that he had discovered."

Even Graham Greene found it necessarv to begin a new book of essays by noting that Thomas Carlyle was 'a great Scottish bore, 'a notation that shed a lot more light on the attention span of Graham Greene than it did on the literary skill of Thomas Carlyle.

ND YET there was a difference between the imaginary jackals of 1919 and the actual scavengers of the late 1970s and early 1980s. Benson's fictional author was still reluctant to describe his ancient sickness with what he thought of as "bald realism." On the contrary, he resolved to "wrap his message up in a sort of mystic subtlety so that only those who had implanted in them the true instinct should be able to fill their souls with the perfume of his flowers. Others might guess and wonder and be puzzled, and perhaps see so far as to put down his book with disgust that was still half incredulous; but only the initiated would be able to grasp wholly the message that lurked in his hints and allusions."

But the artistic thugs of 1980 lived in less

restrictive times, and they had no need-an therefore, they thought, no use-for hints an allusions. The kids were out of the stiffin closet of civilization at last, and eager to g public with the lethal secret that was alway being rediscovered. The old pornographe Henry Miller had given them their stage d rections as long ago as 1961, some twent years before he finally left the world to th mercies of his intellectual progeny, "You see. Mr. Miller explained, "civilized peoples don live according to moral codes or principles of any kind. We speak about them, we pay liservice to them, but nobody believes in them Nobody practices these rules, they have n place in our lives. Taboos after all are only hangovers, the product of diseased minds, voi might say, of fearsome people who hadn't the courage to live and who under the guise of morality and religion have imposed these things upon us."

Like so many of his artistic descendants Mr. Miller was utterly incapable of quitting while he was ahead. "The word 'civilization to my mind is coupled with death. When I us the word, I see civilization as a crippling thwarting thing, a stultifying thing. For me i was always so." "Civilization," hissed the old mountebank. "is the arteriosclerosis of cul

ture."

#### Assault on the past

s the absence of any significant body of genuine contemporary art became increasingly difficult to ignore, there was the inevitable surge of resentmen against the art of the past. Just as an un usually rudderless adolescent may seek to exal his unfinished state—and postpone the year of social responsibility—by assaulting the values of maturity, so did the postwar cultura establishment hope to maintain a shred of it former reputation—and delay the hour of ac countability—by snapping at the authority of the ages.

It was an appalling spectacle, partly because the little snappers were so long past their owr physical adolescence, and partly because they were so unabashed in the bitterness of their resentment: even the most anxious of youthwill try to dignify his fear of adulthood with traditional arguments of political or social theory, but the cultural reactionaries of 1986 came right out in the open and scrawled their mean provincialism on the walls for all to see

It was a form of literary exhibitionism made possible by ignorance but prompted by despair: and despair by its very nature is, as Montaigne's friend Pierre Charron said, "like forward children, who, when you take away one of their playthings, throw the rest into the fire for madness. It grows angry with itself, turns its own executioner, and revenges its misfortunes on its own head," Alas, it was not an establishment that cared much for Charron (or for Montaigne), and the assault on the past grew more insistent as the future grew more ominous; no one in a position of authority seemed to realize that each new attack of bitterness only peeled another layer from the intellectual reputation of the present. and stripped another hour or two from the final days of the gasping era.

Certainly they didn't realize it in the art department of the New Republic, where the critic John Canaday was charging through the corridors of beauty with a literary sledgehammer, taking wild swings at anything that smacked of nobility or purpose. First to fall was the great cathedral at Amiens, which even the cautious Ruskin had referred to as "the Parthenon of Gothic architecture": it became, in Mr. Canaday's angry hands, "the dullest of major medieval monuments." Encouraged by his easy victory, the seventy-three-year-old killjoy took a quick crack at one of the greatest of Renaissance painters-"it is safe for the first time in nearly five centuries to find Raphael tiresome"-and set off down the hall in search of Athens. When he arrived, he was firm but cunning: "Nobody is discarding the Parthenon and the Elgin marbles," he said slyly-but let's face it, Novelty was ever so much more exciting than excellence, and "young classical scholars" would find "more excitement" in the "variety" and the "wider range of humanistic attitudes" of later periods. Suddenly Mr. Canaday spied a familiar giant in the corner, and he lashed out: it was safe, he cried, "to regard Michelangelo as more baroque (and what a dirty word 'baroque' used to be) than golden." The triumphant critic surveyed the wreckage, and it was Fine: "Give it a little more time," he said anxiously, "and all those golden ages may begin to look more like preludes than consummations. Which would be all to the good."

But the sweet moment of hope was interrupted by an awful scream from the other end of campus, where Henry James was receiving his lumps from the humanist Jonathan Yardley, one of the nation's leading book critics. Mr. Yardley, a good man and true, was nevertheless complaining that James's novel The Golden Bowl was a "boring" book, almost as boring as Henry Adams's silly old autobiography. Damn straight, said Mr. Yardley's editorial bosses at the Washington Star, gleefully tossing Booth Tarkington into the trash (Penrod and Sam was "an artifice"), and incidentally expressing the fear that the new Faulkner Book Awards might become—what else—"a child of literary elitism." And if the Elitists were coming, could the Snobs and (shudder) the Purists be far behind?

HERE WAS a kind of perverse cyclical logic to all this: when the pack is in full retreat-when your local Leading Critic is ill at ease with James and Adams and even Tarkington-then all the genuine literature of the past does indeed begin to smack of intellectual elitism. And indeed, it wasn't long before the syndicated columnist Rod MacLeish began confessing that he'd always regarded Marcel Proust as "an impenetrable bore." By the same token, Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter was "a drag,' as we say in the literary community, "a prissy piece of drivel." Dreiser "couldn't write a coherent English paragraph," Faulkner too was a bore, and so was just about everybody else who'd had the luck to walk the planet before Roderick MacLeish had arrived on the literary scene. "Honestly, now," tittered Mr. MacLeish, "have you gotten through Moby Dick more than once?'

By definition, of course, the MacLeishes of the world are incompatible with the Hawthornes and the Melvilles and the Shakespeares of the world; but as 1980 wore on, the spirit of MacLeish seemed to be spreading with unusual speed. Even Graham Greene found it necessary to begin a new book of essays by noting that Thomas Carlyle was "a great Scottish bore," a notation that shed a lot more light on the attention span of Graham Greene than it did on the literary skill of Thomas Carlyle. Some of the most embarrassing symptoms surfaced down at the Washington Post, where house philosopher Richard Cohen was letting everybody know that although he'd dutifully read "the dirty parts," as he called them, of D. H. Lawrence and Henry Miller ("who, I reluctantly concluded after a lot of page turning, has a wholly undeserved reputation as a dirty writer"), he'd never been able to plow through boring stuff like War

Henry James and Herman Melville be damned: in times of intellectual frenzy you don't take chances with the company product, Buster; and if even War and Peace was a bore, if The Scarlet Letter was a Prissy Piece of Drivel, what was a publisher to do?

and Peace, The Brothers Karamazov, Bleak House, Paradise Lost, Pride and Prejudice, Man's Fate, Keats, Shelley, Wordsworth, Burke, Hardy, or "the Marshall McLuhan of his time," Aristotle ("I'm sure once he is understood, his reputation will suffer"). Why heck, said Mr. Cohen, he couldn't even handle Tom Sawyer or Huckleberry Finn, let alone Moby Dick: "I cannot read the book," said he with bovish pride.

A hewildered reading public naturally assumed that some kind soul at the Post would take the how aside and gently but firmly direct him to a new career, but these hopes were dashed a few days later when Mr. Cohen's assistant managing editor threw his own hat into the ring: "I confess to never having read F. A. Hayek's Road to Serfdom," thundered the editor, winning points for imagination. Being an editor at the Post, he had to take the mandatory copulatory digression ("for the longest time in my burning adolescent years. I actually thought 'laissez faire' was a dirty French expression for 'let's do it' "), but he finished up with a flourish: "When I was in college, I confess, I fell asleep over Locke and Mill and Adam Smith.'

By this time, however, the competition to decide which writer couldn't read the most books was threatening to get out of hand, and there was a general sigh of relief when the publishing house of Harper and Row announced that it would no longer publish any books that could not first prove to a "marketing computer" that they would show "a substantial return." Henry James and Herman Melville be damned: in times of intellectual frenzy you don't take chances with the company product, Buster; and if even War and Peace was a bore, if The Scarlet Letter was a Prissy Piece of Drivel, what was a publisher to do?

Redefining Art

N TIME, those members of the community who were farthest from the emergency exits began bashing madly away at the immutable boundaries of art and philosophy, on the old theory that if everything was art, then nothing was art—and you couldn't be prosecuted for intellectual crimes against something that had never existed in the first place, could you?

It was in such a spirit of false ecumenicity that the ordinarily sensible editors of the New

Republic resolved to turn over large chunks of their "Books and the Arts" department to a pack of garrulous punk-rock fans. The New Wave Republicans were soon torturing their dazed subscribers with interminable analyses of things like Professor Longhair's Crawfish Fiesta (the professor's "last and best album"). The Wall ("never less than titillating"). Get Happy ("ferocious intensity"), and The Pretenders ("an extraordinary debut" by a band of "new-wave neoclassicists"). And yet, even as they rocked, the kids seemed to sense that there was something a bit odd about their new responsibilities: "It has become obvious," said rock Republican Jim Miller, "that many of the most interesting developments in rock are no longer likely to reach many people." He knew something was happening, but he didn't know what it was: "The implications are not yet clear," confessed Mr. Miller, who just couldn't understand why so many of his fellow intellectuals weren't Being Reached by "albums that challenge received ideas about the links between rock and roll and popular culture."

The poor chap might just as well have been musing about the Received Ideas of Jovce Carol Oates or Barbara Cartland: the jargon of literary criticism had become interchangeable with the patter of punk rock, and-this was the interesting factor-nobody noticed. The actual object of criticism—the work under discussion-had become a complete irrelevancy. It was not even essential that there be a subject; what mattered was that the critical chatter itself should endure, week after week. month after month, decade after decade, all the buzzing phrases in all the proper places. Elvis Costello, John Updike, Sophie's Choice or Crawfish Fiesta, it was all one and the same to the remnants of the professional literary community: the criticism had assumed a life of its own in a world of its own, and anything was fair game. And Miller of the New Republic could buzz along with the best of them: "There is something oddly compelling about this album. Since I first heard it, I've scarcely stopped playing it, perhaps because the music manages to be simultaneously erotic and repulsive." And please God, it was all terribly terribly important: "There has never been anything quite like it before in rock and roll," and hey, "the boundaries of rock are being redrawn," and don't you kids out there care anymore?

The awful howls of diminishing influence grew ever louder, and finally even the New

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Vork Review of Books, which had been expected to review the books of New York until he bitter end, suddenly jumped ship and loated rather groggily to the surface with a eries of articles about old movie comedians. laught by surprise, the Washington Post's Book World slapped a sketch of comic Woody Allen onto its own cover and paid a Distinmished Professor of Renaissance Literature Samuel Schoenbaum of the University of vlaryland) to come up with an essay about Vir. Allen's new "collection of comic writing": 'A wonderfully gifted creative presence," ighed the professor happily, and nobody had he decency to tell the poor chap that the Wonderful Presence had only written another olume of funny stories.

The Panic of 1980, it was every man for himself, and the distinguished professor went on to prove it by scurrying up to Boston to take part in the obscenity rial of the film Caligula, which—as every student of very early Renaissance literature nust now know—was produced by Bob Gucione of Penthouse as a guide to "various orms of sexual practice and torture in the

irst century."

Professor Schoenbaum was very much a nan of the world, of course, and he wasn't nuch bothered by any of that old "sexual practice" stuff, not even, as he said later, all hat "oral sex, complete to the final spasm"; out he did suggest rather shamefacedly that ne'd been just a leetle bit upset by a few of he more "hideously drawn out" torture scenes. Still, unlike the rest of us in those dark times, his particular man of the world took, Ahem, 'a very serious view of the Constitution and he rights guaranteed by the First Amendnent," so he did his intellectual duty, right up there on the witness stand; he looked that old judge straight in the eye and told him that he movie had "serious artistic value," because t had John Gielgud and Peter O'Toole in it, and hadn't Peter O'Toole been nominated for in Oscar five times? Well, there you were, your Honor, there you were. And anyway, continued Professor Schoenbaum, he seemed to remember having read somewhere that the Emperor Caligula had presided over "an orgiastic court unfettered by moral constraints," and somehow it followed that movie theaters in Boston ought to be at least as unfettered as the court of Caligula. After all, this was America, and it was the twentieth century, and that kind of thing. The Distinguished Professor of Renaissance Literature wasn't a DPRL for nothing: as a matter of fact, he was the only man in the game who could say with authority that the *Penthouse* script had more "historicity" than one of Shakespeare's lesserknown plays, and he said it, and, well, it just about stopped the show dead.

But not for long: the nervous academic was joined in the cultural chorus line by an unusual person from California who had devoted her life to the study of the mechanical aspects of the rarest varieties of human sexual activity. This person had flown all the way across the country in order to tell the people of Massachusetts that certain explicit sexual scenes in Caligula had "educational" value. She didn't explain why on earth the people of Massachusetts or any other state ought to be at all interested in her opinions about anything, and after a few minutes she went away again. Still, it had been an inspiring sight, this chance conjunction of sexology and historicity, and it gave the cultural and academic communities a brief moment of false hope: perhaps art could be redefined, or even liquidated; perhaps Ultimate Meanings could be measured in terms of Oscar nominations and final spasms!

It was a time of delightful madness, and it lasted for just a few more minutes, as the stand was taken by a slightly less distinguished but no less determined professor from Harvard. His name was Bowersock, he said: he was the head of the classics department, and of course he had also been a consultant at the National Endowment for the Humanities. Professor Bowersock implied that the Art in question wasn't quite kinky enough: there were, it seemed, "even more revolting episodes in the ancient sources." For reasons that he neglected to divulge, the classicist wanted Americans to "contemplate the facts that one would rather not contemplate," though he stopped short of insisting that matinée performances of Caligula be made mandatory in the nation's universities.

Unfortunately, other folks had apparently stopped short of insisting that certain books by Stobart, Scullard, and some twenty other authorities be made mandatory reading in Harvard's classics department: "For me, this has drawn attention to the neglect of a formative period in the early Roman empire," revealed the professor, who imagined, somewhat surprisingly, that Caligula's reign had been "ignored until recent times," "History

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can be very unpleasant," he concluded darkly, drawing on his vast store of arcane knowledge.

But if history could be unpleasant, the study of history could be rather a kick in the head: under questioning, the witness shed a bit of light on the state of his own art by explaining that he'd accepted a \$2,000 check from Penthouse, proving once again that underneath all that tinsel and glamour, Hollywood literati were Just Like Folks. And on this magic night in the history of the cinema. Professor Bowersock had some good news and some bad news: he was leaving Harvard, he said, and going to Princeton. In the emotional aftermath of the announcement, all agreed that it had been a truly marvelous episode in the Redefinition of Art, perhaps the last of its kind, and a real slap in the face for the enemy (if indeed there was an enemy). But in the cold light of dawn, the awful fear returned, and it was even stronger than before, "Nobody asked me if I enjoyed Caligula," muttered Professor Schoenbaum of Maryland somewhat defensively, implying that he'd really put one over on judge, jury, and nation, if not on himself. But then, perhaps he was just beginning to realize that he'd miscalculated the going rate for artistic sensibility: "I had asked for \$1,000," he said, "and in the end a check for a thou awaited me in Boston." The silver screen had claimed its latest victim, and another cultural escape hatch had been slammed shut.

EANWHILE, back at the Washington Post, the terrified monks were devoting considerable attention to a book called The Durable Fig Leaf, which was, sad to say, A Historical, Cultural, Medical, Social, Literary, and Iconographic Account of Man's Relations With His Penis. "The last decade has already seen a number of important books on this subject," said the Post's reviewer, presumably with a scholarly frown; nevertheless, Fig Leaf made "a legitimate point," which was that "since prehistoric times, man has been preoccupied with his"well, with his, you know. (The Post didn't say just which man had been so preoccupied, but the guessing around town was that he probably worked for a Major National Newspaper.) In any case, by the time the literary gang at the Post got around to recommending Breasts: Women Speak About Their Breasts and Their Lives, all caution had been thrown to the winds. The book was, by golly, "an important

contribution," and it packed an unusual mes sage as well: "The message of this book is fo women to make friends with their breasts. gulped the Post's reviewer, no doubt suppress ing a sentimental sob or two. The illustration were particularly impressive, to a bookisl mind: "As the photographs demonstrate breasts come in tremendous variety." Ivory tower types might have been stunned to learn that "there are big breasts and little breasts." but that was the kind of year it was, a year of intellectual ferment, "My only criticism," con cluded the worried critic, "is that so few o the women interviewed seemed to have a sense of humor about their breasts." It was the judge ment of the Post that "a lighter touch might help women feel better about their breastsand themselves "

But by that time, of course, the situation had degenerated far beyond the point at which a healthy giggle or two might have done some good: the trouble in the literary columns of the Washington Post was merely a reflection of the trouble in the rest of the paper, just as the Post itself was merely another victim of the spreading intellectual hysteria, a micro-

cosm of the general anguish.

And what an unusually single-minded anguish it was, too: the anguish of a nervous intellectual imposter who is determined to keep the conversation hovering around one minor observation because he knows he would have nothing to say about any of the major implications. The literary community's pet subject-the one subject that still seemed to be attached to the sales figures-was defended by the Post's plaintive resident pundit, Richard Cohen: "No one would argue that the various sex surveys have not proven useful," he pleaded, with a disarming lack of embarrassment; after all, "the world has been made better by what it has found out about sexwhat people do and with whom they do it." Also, the sexual conduct of Mr. Cohen's fellow citizens was, um, "an important subject-at the very least, an obsession." Quite so.

Sex, sex, sex, etc.

ORMAL HUMAN VULCARITY (as one of the Washington Post's senior essayists referred to it) is one of the minor vices, and the academic and literary vulgarians were not evil folk. On the contrary: they were, on the whole, a fundamentally decent and well-intentioned lot, the

One of the larger bookstore chains on the East Coast could and did take out fullpage advertisements in various literary supplements in order to push a volume dedicated to the proposition that readers should -sorry-'orgasm more frequently.'

ort of people who would never behave at some as they were so pleased to behave in orint. And that was precisely the problem: in a secure intellectual climate, people will not lo in print what they might do at home. Just as a public snicker from an otherwise civilized soul is often a sign of social embarrassment, a verbal and spiritual vulgarity that flourishes in the midst of silver and refinement and erulition is usually a symptom—and a sourceof intellectual fear and moral uncertainty.

There is a Roman saving from the first cenury: "When the truth cannot be clearly made out, what is false is increased through fear." So it is that minor literary and spiritual vices that develop in the flustered pursuit of elusive trends or transient popularity or new subscriptions do not always remain minor; any one of them is potentially disastrous, because all of them proceed from ethical and intellectual timidity, which always proceeds from dishonesty. "In morals," said the art historian Mrs. Jameson, "what begins in fear usually ends in wickedness. Fear, either as a principle or as a motive, is the beginning of all evil." By the same token, habitual vulgarity-in an individual or a journal or a literary establishment or a people—is extraordinarily unhealthy, because it mocks the things of the spirit and slowly squeezes out all serious thought, all fruitful discourse, and all genuine sentiment. In the end, that is why widespread ignorance of the verities, literary or other, is so dangerous: because it leads to fakery and to vulgar bravado, which lead to fear of exposure, which leads to intellectual hysteria, which can smother the cultural and sometimes the physical life of a civilization.

The point here is that the Important Obsession was also a convenient cover, during the time of the great literary and cultural madness. As the former intellectual community slid further and further into a kind of twilight zone of pseudoliteracy, the grand old subject—"what people do and with whom they do it"—began to function as a rather rickety lifeboat for critics and editors adrift on the seas of intellectual confusion. It was an almost surrealistic experience, in the dusk of the nuclear era, to see grown men and women struggling tearfully to duplicate and popularize the perceptions of a psychologically troubled thirteen-year-old.

The scramble—not to put too fine a point on it—was more than a little weird: from the former editor in chief of the house of Putnam ("I adore good pornography") to the former

president of the Olympia Press ("Healthy eroticism") to the former director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art ("Like it or not. pornography is part of the artistic spectrum"), the pack was scrabbling for space in one of literary history's most peculiar schools of thought. Publishers like E. P. Dutton and the New York Times Book Company let it be known that they were in the market for "erotica" (Dutton also wanted novels of "permanent literary value"), and Peter Prescott of Newsweek even issued buzzing guidelines for the production of good perversity: "True perversity, of the sort that Lolita and The Story of O afforded, must make the reader shudder in recognition. It requires of its author such an obsessive concentration that all elements of his story are transformed by the corruption at its core: the world must be made new again, just as it is in every good novel." Some, like the bright-eyed refugee from Putnam (William Targ) had a personal interest in the matter ("Screw is the greatest buy in porno anywhere"), but others had more convoluted attitudes: "Because pornography is so accessible, the rest of the arts can wipe their brows and say, 'Whew, we don't have to have as much explicit nudity and intercourse," explained the former museum official. "It permits the arts to be more exalted."

N MORE SERIOUS times, the suggestion that genuine art might adjust the degree of its exaltation to the quantity of available pornography would have boggled every mind worth boggling, just as the assumption that art might ever encompass "explicit nudity and intercourse" (with the emphasis on "explicit") would have been howled out of the museum. on the very elementary grounds that art (and especially written art) deals not with explicit things but with the implications and the consequences of explicit things. But then these were not serious times, and genuine art just wasn't in the ball park, saleswise: on the contrary, it was a time when one of the larger bookstore chains on the East Coast could and did take out full-page advertisements in various literary supplements in order to push a volume dedicated to the proposition that readers should-sorry-"orgasm more frequently." Worse, it was a time when literary supplements were prepared to tolerate and even welcome those advertisements, advertisements that included a pep talk from the

leering author: "You don't need to be in-

Walter Clemons of Newsweek ... found himself recommending one 'unusually handsome and thoughtful volume' as a Christmas gift because it encompassed 'the frankly erotic along with the functionally anatomical and [ugh] the chastely aesthetic.'

hibited by negatives, limited by punishing old dogmas, or chained by your fear-ridden past anymore... You can maximize your,own excitement!"

As so often before, professional book reviewers of the middle class had been among the very first to throw out their punishing old dogmas and fear-ridden pasts, and along about Christmastime Walter Clemons of Newsweek had maximized his literary excitement to such an extent that he found himself recommending one "unusually handsome and thoughtful' volume as a Christmas gift because it encompassed "the frankly erotic along with the functionally anatomical and [ugh] the chastely aesthetic," and another (which featured photographs of nude and unsuspecting celebrities) because it was "good nasty fun." Women might be "ashamed" to buy the book, said Mr. Clemons, shrugging his Hemingway-like shoulders, but "nobody will resist greedily

turning its pages."

If it was an order, it certainly wasn't going to be disobeved in the literary basement of People magazine, where the crew had just gone ape over an "extremely nasty little book" by one of America's supremely nasty little writers, Robert Coover, Mr. Coover, who was best known for a batch of narratives in which very graphic and very bad things happened to naked little girls, had "one of the most original imaginations in contemporary literature," according to People, but nobody wanted to check to make sure. The novelist Scott Spencer was much more talented and considerably less offensive than Mr. Coover. but he attracted similar wails of critical ecstasy. Larry Swindell of the Village Voice thought that "the sex" in Mr. Spencer's latest book was really quite, "quite marvelous." Also "essential," of course, always "essential": why, if it hadn't been essential, Mr. Swindell wouldn't have given it a second glance, you may be sure of that. But seeing as how it was essential, Mr. Swindell didn't mind saving that there were, um, "several passages of combustible, pulsating activity.

What was merely the predictable jerk of a tired old ideological knee at the Village Voice was something much more embarrassing at the Chicago Sun-Times, where poor Alice Adams was trying to keep up with the boys: "The sexual passages are dazzlingly original," she shouted. "Brilliant," she gasped. It was a good thing she'd managed to get all that out, too, because when it came time for Knopf and the Book-of-the-Month Club to put to-

gether some ads hyping Mr. Spencer's book both of them just happened to single out the reviewers' remarks about the Sexual Passages for quotation. And there Ms. Adams was, right there in the advertisements with Mr. Swindell, the two of them doing the ancient Chant of the Essential Sexual Passage (Christopher Lehmann-Haupt was there too, shouting something about how he had "devoured" the book).

UT TIME was running out: the boat was being lowered over the side, and the former literati had begun to fight with one another over the few remaining spaces. Among the most ambitious (and eccentric) of the applicants was the Washington correspondent for the New Statesman, Claudia Wright, Ms. Wright began one of her book reviews by announcing that she'd "once had a lover" who'd achieved "internal ecstasy" by pelting the reviewer's naked form with stale candy. "What is unforgettable," insisted the lady from the New Statesman, "is the surprising 'plupp' sound, which a chocolate cherry liqueur makes upon diving from its paisley camouflage to strike the nether flesh of the female body, momentarily positioned by"-well, she went on plupping, so to

None of this had much to do with the book in question, of course-or with literature in general, for that matter-but it did help to pass the time while waiting for the flood. Gail Godwin tried to get into the increasingly specialized act by saying very loudly that John Hawkes's new novel of "a repressed man being educated into passion by a prisonful of unleashed women" made her "shudder and nod 'ves' in alternate waves," but the poor girl didn't stand a chance. Her feeble shudders were brushed aside by one Madeline Gray, who was the author of a new biography of Margaret Sanger. Ms. Gray was reviewing another new biography of Havelock Ellis (for the Washington Post's Book World), and not so incidentally reminiscing about the time she'd paid a surprise visit to the ratty old sexologist. "He surprised me by asking if I wanted to stay over with him. What really was he asking?" "Though no innocent," said Ms. Gray hurriedly, "I was afraid to find out.... What a mistake it was to refuse that invita-

tion!" The determinedly world-weary Ellis-

follower wanted all book fans to share her dis-

appointment: "The offer was never repeated.

The Washington correspondent for the New Statesman, Claudia Wright ... began one of her book reviews by announcing that she'd 'once had alover' who'd achieved 'internal ecstasy' by pelting the reviewer's naked form with candy.

and if I had taken it up I might have been ble to help solve one of the chief Ellis myseries: Was he or was he not capable of nornal sexual intercourse?" At this point Ms. ray seemed to forget where she was and nere was a lot of disconnected chatter about caressing naked bodies" and-inevitablymutual masturbation," all of which came toether in one glorious intellectual proposition: Seminal emissions also include at least paral erections," thundered the scholarly Ms. ray, and not a voice was raised in opposiion. But then, Doris Grumbach had already aid traditional tribute to the late Mr. Ellis's seminal work," which had "described" the non-evil, non-sinful nature" of "masturbaion," "homosexuality," and all the rest of the lements in the Grumbachian literary lexicon. Predictably, Ms. Grumbach liked the new jography of the old lecher because it was, ike All Good Biographies, "unjudgmental.") Is for Ms. Gray, it was her considered opinion hat the "essential quality" of Havelock Ellis vas "radiance": "I am one of those who will ever forget," she concluded girlishly (well, o wonder).

By the time the sewing club had managed o establish its interest in the Important Subect, all was pandemonium. Even the proud old firm of Alfred A. Knopf (which had once published the books of Thomas Mann and Walter de la Mare and Willa Cather and Ivy Compton-Burnett and E. M. Forster and Dag Hammarskjöld) found itself rolling drunkenly fround on the lower decks, offering one more 'new cultural interpretation of male sexuality" o any poor sucker who would hand over wenty bucks for a four-pound volume of erotic anecdotes assembled by an ex-model named Shere Hite. According to Time magaine, "raunchy pictures" of the distinguished uthor had somehow "turned up" in skin magazines like Oui and Hustler—not at all the sort of thing that used to happen to Ivy Compon-Burnett or Dag Hammarskjöld. From the bowels of the doomed ship came a single (and an honorable) gasp of horror: "The Hite Report on Male Sexuality is trash," wrote the critic Jonathan Yardley, "and it is appalling to see such a book being produced by the most respected publishing firm in the country." But the most respected publishing firm in the country was a thing of the past: "This book will radically alter the perceptions of American readers," shrieked the strippers from Knopf, and a grateful nation bowed its head, as if to say, "Thanks, guys, we love you too."

Social misfits who were unhappy with the cultural vision of the House of Knopf-or who were just bored by the whole Important Subject-could always hop across the literary wreckage to the offices of the National Endowment for the Humanities, where the resident humanists were using some spare tax revenue to fund a dramatization of the "thought" of radical historian Michel Foucault, complete with "such social-change phenomena as a medieval torture session, prison riots, and gay liberation and radic-lib political demonstrations." The Washington Star was ever so impressed: "Have you ever heard anyone being drawn and quartered?" Everybody laughed nervously and said that No, they hadn't, actually, but boy they sure would like to sometime, being Humanists and all. Why, just the thought of it got everybody so excited that they all scampered out into the backyard to look for some more social-change phenomena.

There was a promising little pocket of the stuff over at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, where the star of the disco movie Saturday Night Fever had just been appointed to the Artist's Committee, presumably on the theory that in the era of Social Change, one Artist could disco as well as another. The handwriting was all over the walls, the community elders were moving to the beat of a superannuated drummer, and it was only a matter of time before the swingers at the "National Cultural Center" caught up with 1965 and decided it was time to expose their charges-The People, God Bless 'Em-to a sadomasochistic disco version of John Webster's tragedy of 1612, The White Devil.

Now, when The White Devil was first performed before James I, it was a noble religious allegory, and it stayed that way for almost four centuries, until it was mugged by the Kennedy Center: after which it was "youthoriented," and therefore "explodes with lust and cruelty" (also "drugs, music, and sexual display" and "the shocking senselessness of ritual murder"). The new producers didn't call it a mugging, of course: they put on innocent expressions and insisted that the allegory had merely been "met by a contemporary sensibility," which had left it reflecting "the images of 'Punk Rock' and the Manson Murders," and quivering with "the forbidden erotic appeal of the pornographic imagination." Like, the whole play sort of exploited the "extravagant cultural images that surround us," you know, and I mean it was about as Humanistic as you could get, without actually

It was only amatterof time before the swingers at the 'National Cultural Center' caught up with 1965 and decided it was time to expose their charges -The People. God Bless 'Emto a sadomasochistic disco version of John Webster's tragedy of 1612, The White Devil.

taking off all your clothes and being Senselessly and Ritually Murdered, and hey Oh Wow Oh Wow wouldn't that be a kicky socialchange phenomenon? And then somebody said Hey you guys wouldn't Jack Kroll of Newsweek really freak out on this one, so the Expedition for Social-Change Phenomena went charging up to New York Town to tell Mr. Kroll the good news.

They should have known that Mr. Kroll wouldn't be interested. He was through with the sensibility of 1965; he'd moved all the way up to 1969, and he had in his hot little hands a ten-year-old atrocity by a German named Hildesheimer. It was a play-an unusually bad play-called Mary Stuart; but it "blows a raspberry at Schiller's idealistic treatment of the same theme," so of course Mr. Kroll couldn't get enough of it. "Hildesheimer gives us not high-flown tragedy but a sordid farce whose bitter hilarity is oddly bracing." said the critic, not bothering to disguise the snicker. The play was "savagely sardonic," and there was a whole lot of very familiar "ironic wit," also a "vitriolic view of the hypocrisies of power." Mr. Kroll summarized the excitement in his own words, the musty old words he'd used so many times before: "Mary's doctor and apothecary get her stoned on some sixteenth-century version of Valium. Her French attendant makes a homosexual pass at the young assistant executioner. While dressing [the queen], her maid is casually mounted from behind by a lustful lackey. Calling for her beloved pet dogs, the spacedout Mary doesn't notice that the poor canines have been killed and stuffed. As the dread moment nears, the courtiers jostle, fight, and even murder one another in their fevered rush to"-but never mind. It was enough to note that the twenty-eight-year-old who directed the dramatic Raspberry was one more in a long line of Mr. Kroll's "big talents of the future," primarily because his actors got "right down in the Elizabethan dirt" where Mr. Kroll could get a good look at them.

Reading books, slinging mud

ND INDEED, that was the driving force behind the whole movement for Social-Change Phenomena: the desire—nay, the primitive instinct—to "blow a raspberry" at every man, woman, and child who'd ever towered above the Krolls and the Doctorows and the Capotes

and the Styrons and the Updikes and the Kaels and all the rest of the miserable children of despair. The kids knew, toward the end, that they were going down to particularly ignominious defeat, they could already smell the dirt and the mud and the historical dust. But as long as there was any influence left to them at all, they would continue to heave the ancient mudpies at the ankles of all the frustrating artists who seemed to know where they were going and what they were doing, at all the quiet souls who could direct instinct with reason and control confusion with purpose, at all the people who seemed to grasp those vast truths that the kids down below could never grasp.

The mudpies were the eternal spoor of terror and resentment, and they were aimed at the past and at the future, at progress and understanding, at kindness and harmony and virtue and happiness and purpose; but most of all they were aimed at the concept of maturity, at the social (and therefore, in this context, the artistic) responsibilities of adulthood itself. They were aimed, in other words, at the grownups: at the only class that might have been able to lend a hand, at the only class that could have reached down and lifted the kids up out of the pseudo-Elizabethan mud and put them back on their feet. That was the little sordid secret of the cultural collapse of the twentieth century: the kids liked it down there. They were content, molding their traditional pies of social-change phenomena, and they didn't ever want to stand up again.

What the kids did want—and what they wanted with mounting fervor, as their numbers decreased—was attention. "It is with narrow-souled people as with narrow-necked bottles," said Pope: "the less they have in them, the more noise they make in pouring it out." In those final hours, the good news was that the bottles were almost empty; the bad news was that the noise had become almost intolerable.

Some of the most unsettling gurgles were to be heard over at *The New York Times Book Review*, where the fellows at the front desk had just hired Edmund White, the proud coauthor of *The Joy of Gay Sex*, to write an exhaustive description of—wait for it—the Spiritual Quest of Christopher Isherwood. Now it can be revealed, after a furtive bit of shymaking research, that *The Joy of Gay Sex* is a profusely illustrated, rigorously pornographic piece of the very hardest core, not to be confused with such everyday pablum as *The Joy* 

The true magnitude of the institutionalized anti-intellectualism of the twentieth century would be measured in future years not so much by the number of charlatans who had filled the chairs of English literature and dominated the best-seller charts, but by the number of good men and women who had been denied the opportunity to do good.

of Sex or even The Joy of Lesbian Sex; and vhen you permit the leading authority on Fun Things You Can Do To Strange Boys With Your Fist to compose an essay about the imlications of Indian theology, you are going o get exactly what you deserve, and The New York Times got it: "If I had to propose a canlidate for canonization, Isherwood . . . would get my vote," whispered the joyous reviewer. Which didn't come as an enormous shock to hose members of the congregation who had peen paying close attention to St. Christopher's wn latest sermon: "Now the innocent lust which had fired all that ass grabbing, arm wisting, sparring and wrestling half naked in he changing room could come out stark naked nto the open without shame and be gratified n full. What excited Christopher most, a struggle which turned gradually into a sex et, seemed perfectly natural to these German povs; indeed, it excited them too. . . . Maybe, also, such mildly sadistic play was a characeristic of German sensuality: many of them iked to be beaten, not too hard, with a belt strap," and blessings upon you all, my children.

H, THE LITERARY life, hey, Christopher? But that's the trouble with a bookish career; it is so likely to lead to "innocent lust," and then to "mildly sadistic play," and then to belts, and then before you know it the National Endowment for the Humanities comes along and declares your belt a National Social-Change Phenomenon, and then where are you? Probably teaching creative writing at a Major American University, if you're lucky. That's what St. Christopher was doing with his spare time, during the general collapse, and that's what his determinedly joyous disciple was doing, in those odd moments when he wasn't actually sweating over The Joy of Gay Sex (or his other magnum opus, States of Desire: Travels in Gay America, which was, according to Ned Rorem, "a twenty-city investigation pursued by White, age forty, with an adolescent's horny zeal"). Those must have been tough years for poor Mr. White: sweating through all those long hours in the classrooms of Johns Hopkins (and other universities) teaching freshfaced teenagers about the creative thrust of Anglo-American literature, and then having to spend even longer hours (perhaps in the Reading Room of the British Museum?) jotting down little-known hints about the safest methods of picking up stray barboys.

The cry went round the scholarly community: "What a man is White! How does he do it? Don't we wish we could do it too!" But then Johns Hopkins was a hard-working university, from the president on down. As a matter of fact, the president was a very weary man in those years, the sort of man who could feel the ghost of Aristotle breathing down his neck: "The biggest failing in higher education today is that we fall short in exposing students to values. We don't really provide a value framework to young people who more and more are searching for it," he told U.S. News and World Report, averting his thoughts from the faculty lounge. "Universities have to be able to restore to people some sense of coherence, and that can't be done without humanistic values," he continued, as the fresh faces set off for their morning instruction in the creative thrust of Anglo-American literature. "The failure to rally around a set of values means that universities are turning out potentially highly skilled barbarians."

And yet, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, a high academic official who paid lip service to the humanistic verities while passing out paychecks to a pack of joyous literary barbarians was not necessarily a hypocrite. On the contrary, it was one of the ironies of those years that such an official was almost certain to be an intellectually honest soul, more victim than tyrant, a potentially positive force rendered neutral by a complicated web of codes and tenures and regents and regulations. And if by simply occupying his office he appeared on occasion to lend moral sanction to spiritual barbarity-and he did-it was only because the residual intellectual shibboleths of the postwar academic and literary communities forced that sanction from him. Indeed, the true magnitude of the institutionalized antiintellectualism of the twentieth century would be measured in future years not so much by the number of charlatans who had filled the chairs of English literature and dominated the best-seller charts, but by the number of good men and women who had been denied the opportunity to do good. And that was the final irony: that an intellectual establishment that had dedicated itself for thirty-five years to the nonjudgmental gods of tolerance and openmindedness should finish as an anti-intellectual cult of intolerance, propped up and held in place by a vast network of cultural prohibitions and quasilegal injunctions, and distinguished chiefly for its poverty of discourse and narrowness of vision.

MJohn Simon, the famous
literary critic . . . was taking time off to
review the
latest biography of sexologist Havelock Ellis,
and going on
and on about
the nature of
Havelock's
FirstOrgasm.

Chosts of decency

S THE YEAR drew to its dismal close. it became apparent that the rot was far more pervasive than anyone had previously realized, and that the panic had already begun to affect even the lowest echelons. Esquire magazine, which had once featured work by Evelyn Waugh and Thomas Mann, suddenly whirled completely out of control and came crashing to the floor with an eight-page analysis of what else-masturbatory devices for ladies, "Multiple orgasms," according to Esquire, were a feature of the "orgasmocentric" society. This explained everything, and nobody fell over backward when the editors contributed a small companion article of their very own, assuring Esquire's remaining fans that they, The Editors, did not personally feel "envious" of "the vibrator's sexual success." On the contrary, the editorial bunch approved of "any acknowledgment by a female of her orgasmic possibilities." "We would like to hear your reactions to this article," sniffled the fellows, looking hopelessly to their readers for some literary guidance.

One thing was clear enough: this was no longer even the ghost of the magazine that had declared, back in 1973, that it was determined "to avoid the more degrading excesses of with-it-ness." By the end of 1980, excessive degradation was pretty much a way of life over at Esquire; and late at night, after the boys had gone to bed, some folks swore they could hear the sad voice of the late Arnold Gingrich, the magazine's founding father: "Esquire stands for anything that will afford amusement to men of intelligence. We aim to keep our readers' minds 'amused,' thoughtfully, intelligently, and on a high intellectual level, much as that most civilized of modern men. Henry Adams, was 'amused' by the multiplicity of life around him."

The saddest thing for m

The saddest thing, for many present, was that the vibrating Esky boys had had the gall to leave the Gingrich name up on the masthead, as though his relatively distinguished shade might lend intellectual legitimacy to the orgasmocentric explorations of a dying literary periodical. On the other hand, observers noted that Gingrich's was just about the only recognizable literary name in the masturbatory issue of Esquire, and concluded that the ragged cultural community had not yet lost its ability to diagnose a terminal case of commercialism when it smelled one. True,

L. Rust Hills contributed a perfectly grown-uplittle essay to the issue, but he was the Literary Editor and an all-around nice guy, so he pretty much had to. And then there was an article by Contributing Editor John Simon but it couldn't have been the John Simon, the famous literary critic, because this character was taking time off to review the latest biography of sexologist Havelock Ellis, and going on and on about the nature of Havelock's First Orgasm ("other than nocturnal emissions," mind you), and wondering at length whether Ellis's fondness for "watching his beloved urinate" was "more important for him than mutual masturbation" or not.

HEN A GOOD and serious writer finds himself taking up increasingly precious space in order to inform his readers that "the most interesting part of the book is the evocation of the sex lives of Ellis and his circle," then it's time for the good and serious writer to weigh seriously the advantages and disadvantages of being a Contributing Editor. "No man can possibly improve in any company for which he has not respect enough to be under some degree of restraint," wrote Chesterfield to his doomed son. And, indeed, that was the tragedy of the time: that the best among us were made small, if only because there were so few to encourage and reward what was best.

John Simon's country needed him desperately, but it did not need that lesser part of him that greeted the new year with an eerie little hymn of praise to the painter Balthus, "the least widely known giant of modern painting." As it happens, Balthus is not a very well-known giant primarily because he isn't a particularly good painter (he's not particularly bad, either), but that was neither here nor there, in John Simon's view (or mine); no. what Mr. Simon admired in the painter's work was the subject matter, the "perverse, inner vision," not to mention the "vague but evil suggestiveness." The two visions he admired most were "the nymphets" and "the perverse scenes from childhood." These particular visions had been "deliberately underrepresented" by the dirty puritan who'd assembled the only available volume of Balthus's work, but Mr. Simon was able to say with authority that the scenes involved "situations in which boys and girls, and an occasional mature woman . . . are involved in equivocal acts or attitudes, usually with sadomasochistic over-

It is becoming apparent that most of the wellknown books of the last thirtyfive years will have been swept up and forgotten by the turn of the century. They were, in large measure, the printed outgrowth of a particular and unrepeatable stage in the adolescence of aliterary democracy, and that stage is beginning to pass into memory.

nes." This was to be expected, mind you, only because Balthus's brother was the shy uthor of Sade, My Kinsman, and because wo of the painter's "close friends" were—in fr. Simon's delicate phrase—"deeply inolved with sadism."

One of Mr. Simon's own fave raves was a seemingly innocent" painting in which a provocative nymphet" had "removed an vershirt" and was sitting "in a serenely indeent pose, her skirt pulled up high on her bare gs," and that kind of thing. And if you liked 1at, Mr. Simon was willing to bet that you'd lso share his enthusiasm for another entry, ne in which a nude girl (wearing "saucy ocks and slippers," of course) "lies in a ose of either total abandon or"-here comes ne artistic part—"victimization." The couch f the possibly victimized child had "overtones f the bath in which David's Marat was murered," and also a "ferocious, masculineoking governess type is opening or closing ne curtains while malignly staring at the prosrate girl, whose body bulges toward her," and an't you just see it? There was some more of ais depressing stuff, and then a quick bow in ne direction of something called "painterly ualities," and then mercifully it was all over. Balthus," concluded the aesthetic Mr. Simon, has evoked a universe of his own-which is ne of the hallmarks of true art.'

It was also utter bilge, of course, and John imon knew it, somewhere deep down inside is soul. "A universe of one's own" may ineed be one of the hallmarks of true art—nature hath made one world, and art anther," said Sir Thomas Browne, who knew bout these things—but not just any old unierse qualifies: it is, in other words, the quality f the universe that matters, and the quality s determined by the extent to which the art as become, in Sir Thomas's phrase, "the verfection of nature." Pictures of naked little irls undergoing sadomasochistic experiences

The surprising thing—and it was a final inlication of the extent of the crisis—was that ohn Simon, of all people, should have been illing to go public with such a hideous little ttack on the meaning of art and life. He would indoubtedly regret having done so, in years o come, because he was that sort of gentleman, and because he really did know (even if few thers did) what Ruskin knew by instincthat art is valuable only insofar as it expresses the personality, activity, and living percepion of a good and great human soul." When

ust do not qualify.

Ruskin spoke of the work of the soul, he was not being abstract: he always meant to imply the work of the whole creature, proceeding from "a quick, perceptive, and eager heart perfected by the intellect, and finally dealt with by the hands, under the direct guidance of these higher powers." It is so ancient and so elementary an understanding of the nature of art and literature that a society that mislays it may only do so willfully. "If it show not the vigor, perception, and invention of a mighty human spirit, it is worthless. Worthless, I mean, as art; it may be precious in some other way, but as art, it is nugatory. Once let this be well understood among us, and magnificent consequences will soon follow." Once let it be forgotten, and disastrous consequences are inevitable.

Any lingering hopes that the federal government might try to impose some last-minute order on the situation by announcing a few new literary guidelines were cruelly dispelled when the Library of Congress revealed to Americans the identity of their new National Poetry Consultant. Head Librarian Daniel Boorstin handed the honor to a fifty-five-yearold professor of English literature named Maxine Kumin, Ms. Kumin's poems "attest an art nearly invisible," according to the Christian Science Monitor, but "nearly" didn't begin to describe it: Ms. Kumin was, after all, the author of such lovely old folk ballads as "Sperm," "The Jesus Infection," and-what was surely everybody's sentimental favorite-"Heaven as Anus." What happy times the guardians of the American dream must have had down at Mr. Jefferson's old library, all gathered round the hearth of scholarship as they joined their blushing Poetry Consultant in joyful chorus:

It all ends at the hole. No words may enter the house of excrement. We will meet there as the sphincter of the good Lord opens wide and He takes us all inside.

Which was just another way of saying that the dear old Literary Community was beginning to look and feel an awful lot like an artistic and intellectual Death Ship. Down in the hold, the remaining Brie was green with mold, and the last of the white wine had turned to vinegar: from London to San Francisco, from the New Statesman to the beleaguered Nation, life jackets were being donned, discreet goodbyes were being exchanged, and the bravest of the literary bourgeoisie were preparing to go underwater for an indefinite

An intellectual class that lacks the capacity to make such judgmentswhich is to say, a class that calls everything 'literature' -lives in a state of perpetual and increasing fear. not just of 'elitism' (or anti-elitism. for that matter), but of various forms of intellectual, legal, and social chastisement. PANIC AMONG THE PHILISTINES

period of time. As the worst of years began to recede into the distance, despair had turned to resignation, and there was little hope.

"Talent" without purpose

N LATER YEARS, the blame for the wider cultural collapse would be laid largely at the door of the literary establishment. And properly so: it was an establishment that had never been able to see things whole, an establishment that had never been able to accept with grace one of the most elementary and one of the most sophisticated truths of artistic virtue and human nature, which is that an individual work of art-like an individual character-must be considered in all its parts. and not just in little pieces, because there are no little pieces, in art or in nature. It was, in other words, an establishment whose guardians were unwilling to administer social, intellectual, or academic punishment to the joyous maker of an ugly little guide to physical (and therefore spiritual) promiscuity, for fear they might seem to be deploring or even pitving any one of a hundred common conditions of emotional, sexual, or moral insufficiency, a deploration that they were much too nice and much too confused to make. By the same token, if Christopher Isherwood could write a decent English sentence (and Christopher Isherwood can write some of the best), then it was not possible to reprimand Christopher for reminiscing in public about the dear dead days when he used to cavort with German prostitutes who liked to be beaten-"not too hard"-with a belt.

It was an inverted hierarchy of values born of a century of mass education: a concept of literature and therefore of humanity within which the highest value was placed on an increasingly widespread grammatical dexterity ("talent," it was called, though it was really only literacy allied with idleness and normal variations of perspective), and the lowest importance attached to grandeur of vision or purpose or intellect. And as such, it in turn gave birth to the ignorance that saw literature as a nondiscriminatory catalogue of random human behavior, rather than as a revelation and an exaltation of the larger human psychology and spirit. It was, in sum, a supremely Philistine view of both art and life, because it imagined literature where there was none, and because it saw no link between the quality of the art and the quality of the life.

ND THAT IS what we are talking about really: linkage, or the absence linkage. Which is of course whi Thoreau was talking about when said that there was "never an instant's true between virtue and vice": he didn't say the there was never an instant's truce except who somebody on campus happened to have a sha wit or a large vocabulary, in which case axioms were off. On the contrary, art requir stricter judgments than life, because art mu be more lucid in its virtue than life or it is n art but decoration. An intellectual communithat understands the concept of artistic linkad is a community that is able to make distinction and judgments over and above the pure aesthetic, a community capable of encouraging what is good in a work (or in an individua without rewarding what is bad, capable punishing the bad without destroying the good, and capable of determining when one so powerful that it must negate the other.

An intellectual class that lacks the capacito make such judgments—which is to say, class that calls everything "literature"—livin a state of perpetual and increasing fear, no just of "elitism" (or anti-elitism, for that mater), but of various forms of intellectual, lega and social chastisement. And it is a justific fear: if there is nothing other than a title page to distinguish the most decorated art from the most lamentable society, then a civilization that decides to tighten up on itself—and civil zations do tighten up, from time to time—winecessarily tighten up on its "literature" awell, often with disastrous consequences.

By contrast, an intellectual community ca pable of making sound moral and philosopl ical judgments (in addition to aesthetic ones is always able to maintain a line of defens against exterior threats of censorship. It able to defend its intellectual credibility-an thus its civil authority-simply because it prepared to banish antiliterary pretenders from the halls of the community, merely by dis missing them from serious consideration (eve if they exhibit the most startling grammatics eccentricities) and relegating them to the realm of unpopular entertainment, where the are at liberty to pursue their printed interest with whatever degree of freedom the large society's entertainment committees choose ti permit. Such a community is happy, in other words, to bar the author of a barbaric little fornicatory workbook from the literary (and most other) columns of The New York Time or the Washington Post, on the grounds that

An intellectual community that believes in good and evil constitutes its own bulwark against Philistine intolerance, simply because its individual members tend to identify and preserve their various notions of the bad in order that they may glorify their separate visions of the good.

his past performances in print render him unfit (pending some sign of intellectual rehabilitation) to speak with serious men and women about serious things.

Such actions are known as "editorial decisions," and they imply an intellectual and philosophical commitment on the part of the editors who make them. Of course there are always some editors-and some reviewers and readers and bookdealers-who cannot bring themselves to make editorial decisions, which means that there is always a home for stray barbarians, which is as it should be; but because this subsidiary school of editors and writers and readers is no longer part of the higher community, it constitutes a lesser threat to art, which is also as it should be. And, paradoxically, even as the higher community is reestablishing the principle of artistic exclusivity, it is also enlarging its membership, according to its habit of admitting and rewarding only the serious and the true: which is to say that it encourages the well-intentioned but defective artists (such as Isherwood) to concentrate their energies and define their purposes so they may retain their literary reputations.

In such fashion is the bad discouraged and the good given space to breathe, and in such fashion also are the arguments for external repression disarmed, And, finally, an intellectual community that believes in good and evil constitutes its own bulwark against Philistine intolerance, simply because its individual members tend to identify and preserve their various notions of the bad in order that they may glorify their separate visions of the good. So said the critic Willmott, not so long ago: "Books, of which the principles are diseased or deformed, must be kept on the shelf of the scholar, as the man of science preserves monsters in glasses. They belong to the study of the mind's morbid anatomy, and ought to be accurately labelled. Voltaire will still be a wit, notwithstanding he is a scoffer; and we may admire the brilliant spots and eyes of the viper, if we acknowledge its venom and call it a reptile."

Whether one agrees with Willmott about the reptilian characteristics of Voltaire or not is beside the point. The point is that Voltaire is still on the shelves to be read, and one of the reasons he is still on the shelves is that Willmott had the interest and the courage to "label him accurately," according to the code of Willmott. As Auden said: "Some books are undeservedly forgotten; none are undeservedly remembered.

HE POPULAR literature of an educated democracy, like democracy itself, is not always a lovely thing in and of itself: it is merely a means to a better end, and it is good only to the extent that the people make it good. By the same token, it is only as bad as the people allow themselves to become. Which is to say that we must be careful not to confuse our art with our politics; the democratic societal and intellectual structure makes the production (and the appreciation) of good art possible, but not mandatory. Still less does that structure guarantee that good art will be recognized if it does appear.

It is becoming apparent that most of the well-known books of the last thirty-five years will have been swept up and forgotten by the turn of the century. They were, in large measure, the printed outgrowth of a particular and unrepeatable stage in the adolescence of a literary democracy, and that stage is beginning to pass into memory. Sad to say, the genuine literature of the period is likely to be forgotten for a while as well, if only because humans are generally reluctant to paw through last week's garbage on the off chance of finding the lost penny or two. It is one of the tolls we pay on the way to genuine mass education. and it is a stiff one.

The literature of a democracy in transition -which is to say the literature of a democracy just past the midpoint between widespread illiteracy and universal erudition-is necessarily in danger, simply because the citizens of such an adolescent democracy share just enough of the blessings of literacy to render them superficially indistinguishable from one another, so that the exceptional cannot easily be disentangled from the unexceptional, the serious not easily separated from the glib. The phrase "the reading public" used to have a very precise application: it referred to a lucky, well-educated minority-or, more specifically, to those few within that minority who truly cared for books and ideas. Now it refers to everybody: the man or woman who is exalted by Beyond Jogging has the same vote as the man or woman who reads Plutarch. By the same token, as the ability to read and write and reason on an elementary level becomes more and more common, so does the tendency to read and write the honored words-words like "art" and "literature" and "good" and "bad"-without knowing what they mean.

Much of the popular literature of an incompletely educated republic is like the love sonnet of a talented twelve-year-old: it may

MAS the ability to read and write and reason on an elementary level becomes more and more common, so does the tendency to read and write the honored words-words like 'art' and 'literature' and 'good' and 'bad' - with out knowing what they mean.

use some of the right phrases in some of the right places, but it has no understanding behind it, and signifies little but a promising fluency. Fluency can be valuable around the home, but when all the sonnets of precocious childhood are slapped between hard covers and hurled at an unsuspecting civilization, then "the severe discipline necessary for all real culture" (as Arnold described it) just doesn't stand a chance, it is as if a thousand different souls had suddenly hit upon the same word to describe a thousand different conditions and intellectual chaos reigns.

It is only a matter of time before there is some unward seepage of the confusion: when everybody can grind out a marginally decent (or indecent) sentence, then everybody is a potential member of "the literary community." Inevitably, the false literati come to outnumber the real thinkers and writers and publishers, and all of a sudden the nongrammatical qualities of genuine art and culture-moral, intellectual, and spiritual grandeur-begin to smack suspiciously of "elitism," just as the mere ability to write at all smacked of elitism some two centuries ago. Thus is the stage set for trouble, and then do novelists like John Irving begin to complain in increasingly strident tones about "super-literary cliques in publishing," who "speak only to one another and not to the public," etc.

"Elitists" are to the literary Philistines what grownups are to the twelve-year-old author of the love sonnet, and the Philistines want exactly what the twelve-year-old wants: praise from the grownups. Indeed, the only real difference between the old Philistines and the new is that the new ones don't want to be Philistines anymore: they want to be "artists" and "writers," or at any rate they want to be thought of as artists and writers. They require more than money and celebrity and a spot on somebody's best-seller list: they need moral and intellectual approbation as well. It is when that approbation is not forthcoming that

the shouting begins in earnest.

"Ignorance and charlatanism in work of this kind are always trying to pass off their wares as excellent," said Matthew Arnold, "and to cry down criticism as the voice of an insignificant, overfastidious minority." The cries that Arnold heard will not cease in our lifetime, simply because the charlatans can never receive what they so desperately seek. the sanction and the approbation of the disciplined artist and the honest critic. And, in one sense, we ought to welcome the awful sound: for so long as we hear it, the battle it not yet over and for so long as it continue to increase in volume, the Philistines are it retreat.

HEY WILL be back, of course; they al ways are. As Arnold saw the battle in its early days in England, it was primarily a matter of numbers: "It is not that there do not exist ... a number of people perfectly well able to discern what is good, in these things, from what is had, and preferring what is good; but they are isolated they form no powerful body of opinion, they are not strong enough to set a standard, up to which even the journeyman-work of literature must be brought, if it is to be vendible," And vet, if there is cause for optimism in the long run, this must be its source: that small but ever-growing segment of the "reading public" that has always been, and is now, more scholarly, more interesting, more perceptive, and more thoughtful than the average writer or the average book reviewer or the average editor.

These few men and women are the few who matter, in the artistic context, and these are the few who have always mattered, since the time of Pericles. They are the true literary and artistic democrats, precisely because they are the true guardians of culture; and to the extent that they cherish and preserve the highest values of art and civilization, to that extent may they claim with Arnold that "culture seeks to do away with classes; to make the best that has been thought and known in the world current everywhere; to make all men live in an atmosphere of sweetness and light, where they may use ideas, as it uses them itself, freelynourished, and not bound by them. This is the social idea; and the men of culture are the true apostles of equality."

We must believe in the existence of this democratic aristocracy of art, and we must also believe that in the very long run-which is to speak of centuries-its members make the final judgments. If we did not believe, many of us wouldn't write at all; and if we did not believe, there would be no honor in writing. Or, as E. B. White said: "Being democratic, I am content to have the majority rule in everything, it would seem, but literature." On the day that the cultural minority becomes the literary majority, on that day will the shouting cease, and on that day will the social democracy have fulfilled its artistic promise.

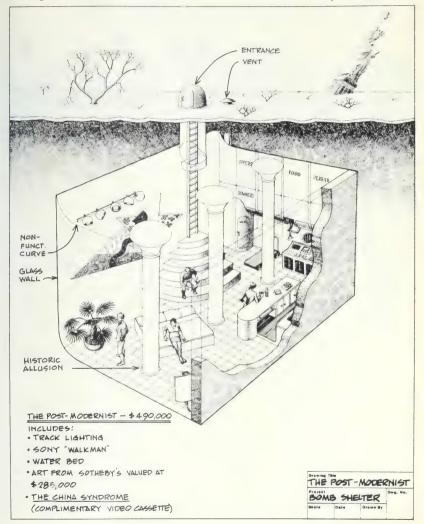
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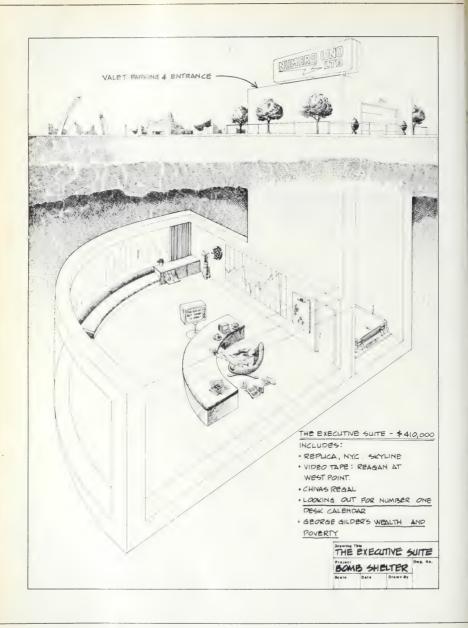
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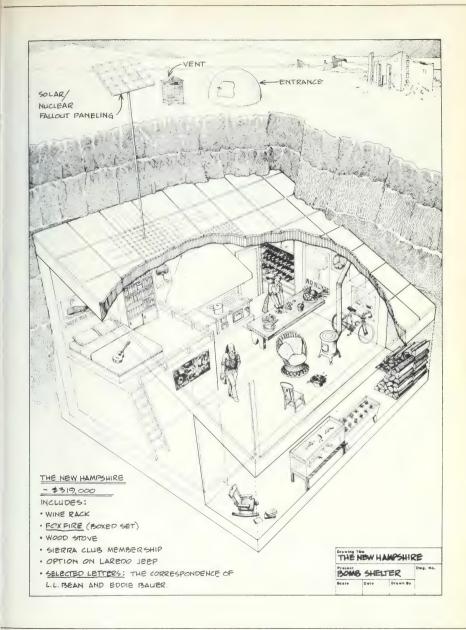
#### THE BOMB SHELTER OF YOUR DREAMS

Catalogue for survival

by Martim Avillez









# The year 1912

story

by Mairtin O Cadhain

✓ HE TRUNK. She said the word offhand yet there was a touch of stubbornness in her tone. She hadn't agreed to go to ightcity with her daughter a week ago last turday to buy the trunk, and it irked her e a white frost the way it had been perched on the ledge of the kitchen dresser, adored e an idol. The children having great play th it, opening it, closing it, looking it all er. She hadn't the heart to vex her daughr this final week, otherwise she would have eared it off into the room under the bed. it tonight, though the daughter might be of different mind and anxious to show off that pensive article to the company that had thered, the mother had followed her own clination at nightfall and moved the trunk to the room-it might, she said, get damed or scratched where it was.

It was like a burnt spot or a smallpox scar i the face of life, tonight especially since she ldom had a hearty gathering under her roof, was useful and well made, but that was only

chimera, a ghost from e Otherworld come to atch away the first neeption of her womb and the spring of her aily life, just when the drinking, the high pirits, the music and errymaking were in all spate. Seven weeks 30, before the passage oney came, she had een as much on edge

awaiting it as Mairin was. That her daughter should be off to America was no surprise to her, no more than the eight sisters of her own whose going was a bitter memory still. She had been schooled by the iron necessities of life to keep a grip on her feelings and throttle her mother love—as Eve ought to have throttled the serpent of Knowledge. It was the passage money that had set the heather ablaze again. Flickers of affection, flashes of insight from shut-away feelings, were setting her sense and reason aglow with the knowledge that this going into exile was worse than the spoiling of a church or the wreck of a countryside...

But it was destiny, must be attended to. The day was agreed. Patch Thomais was gone for the sidecar. Back in the crowded kitchen the merriment had risen to a frenzy; remnants of the wreck of a people, doomed to extinction at daybreak, bringing their ritual vigil to a hurried night's-end climax of wild debauch...

A halfpenny candle stood on a small press by the wall in the bedroom, smeared by a breeze coming by the edge of the paper on a

broken windowpane. Depth, magic, mystery of unfathomable seas, reflected by the guttering candle flame, in the trunk's brass knobs. It was of pale yellow timber, the mother couldn't at once remember where she had seen that color before—the face of a corpse after a long wake in sultry weather. And

was born in Connemara, Ireland, in 1906. He became a teacher and in the 1920s joined the then outlawed IRA. In 1936 he was dismissed and blacklisted, then interned during World War II. In the camp he taught classes in Irish language and literature, and began to write short stories. He died in 1970. The Road to Brightcity, the collection from which this story is taken, is the first of his works to be published in English. Translated from the Irish by Eoghan O Tuairisc. Copyright © 1981 by Eoghan O Tuairisc. Published by

Poolbeg Press, Dub-

lin, in July 1981.

Mairtin O Cadhain



Mairtin O Cadhain THE YEAR 1912 a certain distaste kept her from looking into the trunk, that same taboo that had kept her. though she had often tried, from looking at a corpse in a coffin.

-Have you everything? she asked the daughter, keeping her eyes off the dim-lit thing. There were all kinds of things in it-a sod of turf, a chip off the hearthstone, tresses of hair, a bunch of shamrock though it was autumn. stockings of homespun, a handful of dulse, items of clothing, papers connected with the voyage across. The daughter took her shoes, coat, hat, and dress out of the trunk and laid them on the little press to put on her. During the week she had often laid them out like that but the mother had never encouraged her, and early in the night she had implored her not to put them on till morning.

✓ HE MOTHER shut the trunk, threw the bed quilt over it.-To keep it clean. She had long feared that the daughter, once she was in the American clothes, would be estranged from her, alien as the trunk. Mairin was in her stocking feet and naked except for a long white shift that she had been at great pains to fix about herself that evening and which she had no intention of taking off until she had reached the house of a relative on the other side. Seeing her like that was to see a vision, the only one that had remained clear-skinned and beautiful in her memory. A vision that gave bodily shape to the dear lost Tree of Life, while it made real the delicate and deceitful skin of the Knowledge Apple-a mother's first conception, first fruit. She had so many things on the tip of her tongue to say to her, the intimacies, the affectionate things saved up in mother love. her life-stuff, from the moment she feels the quick seed in her womb until the flush of eternity puts out the twilight of the world.

For a month now she had said many things to the daughter, scraps scattered at long intervals . . . that she couldn't care if all in the house were to go so long as Mairin stayed . . . that the whole house would miss her, herself especially . . . that of all her children she was the one who had given her the least trouble ... that she was fine about a house. But none of all that said what she wanted to say. She felt like a servingwoman, the necklace she was putting about the young queen's neck had broken, its precious stones scattered here and there in danger of being crushed and broken. She felt as if some hostile force were filtering her speech, hindering her from letting loose the flow of talk that would ease the tight grip on her heart. She was aware she could never hope to express the things in her make in a letter that she would have to depend in someone else to write, and in a language whose make and meaning were as unhomel to her as the make and meaning of the Ghat from the Fairymound, And a letter was a por substitute for the living contact of speed eves, features. Her flowing imagination, flor tide of her love, would run thin and freeze a niggardly writing.

She was hardly likely to see her daught again for a very long time. Mairin would ha to repay her passage, then earn the passage of one or two more of the family, as well send a share home. It could happen that to child in her womb would set eyes on her la fore she did. That American coat, the graclothes-how tell one from the other? To "God speed her" that would be said from no on had for its undermeaning "God have m cy on her soul." Children often got those t expressions mixed up. And when the tip came that in actual fact would change to "God speed" into "God have mercy," it would come without a decent laving-out and a bill to be carried, and with no passionate ked Even the graveclothes, no mother would ha them a while to shake out the folds of the from time to time as a relief to her anguis. and there would be neither name nor surnar on a rough bit of board in the churchyard the fiord for generations to come. The vova -that immensity, cold and sterile-would erase the name from the genealogy of the rad She would go as the wild geese go.

But while such ideas were as a sour curd the mother's mind, she wouldn't give in to the thought that she would never see the daug ter again. Her sense and reason said no, he love, hope, determination, said ves. And it w these she listened to. Yet even if she were see her again she knew she'd be utterly unlil the simple country girl, now nineteen year old, with a look pure as morning sun on hillside in the Promised Land. Her lips woul have been embittered by the berries from the Tree of Good and Evil. That dark weasel env in her heart. Experience, that slimy serper writhing in her mind. Temper of cold steel i her countenance. The tone of her voice tran formed by the spell of a harsh stepmothe Such were all returned Americans. She mu reveal herself to her now, as the mother of the warriors in the cave used to reveal herse to her children, when every sallying out search of food was a matter of life and deatl Reveal herself to her while her age and igne rance were still unmocked at, while there wa yet no wall of disbelief between her daugl ter's mind and hers . . .

HE MONEY, she thought, was the best way to begin. She took a cloth purse from her bosom, took out what small change the daughter might need in Brightcity, and gave her the purse with the est. The daughter hung it about her neck and ettled it in her breast under her holy scapular. -Look now, child, you take good care of t. It's likely you won't need it at all, but if you fail to find work soon it would be too nuch to be depending on Aunt Nora who has per own children to look after. Keep the rug ucked well round you on the vessel. Make free with no one unless it happens to be someone ou know. You'll be safe as soon as you reach Nora's house. Even if you have to take small pay, don't overstrain yourself working. You vill make a visit home after five years. Well,

it least after ten years. It can't be but you'll

have a few pence put by by then. My . . . She had kept her spirits nicely up to that. But as soon as she thought to break the crust of speech she couldn't find a word to say but tood stock still staring at her daughter. Hands iddling with the folds of her apron. Blushing, ears and smiles painfully together in her heek, Humps and wrinkles of distress coming n her forehead like keys struggling with a ock. The daughter was almost dressed by now and asked where was the small change she'd need in Brightcity? The mother had been so eager to talk that she had forgotten to get a ittle purse to put it in. Turning to get it she ell into such confusion she forgot the money n her fist until it fell and scattered about the loor. Her idea had been to wait till her tongue could contrive a proper speech, then to hand over the small change to the daughter as a sacred offering, embrace and kiss her. Instead, he sacrifice had been ripped from her hand.

Putting away the little purse the daughter felt an envelope in her pocket.-A tress of your hair, mamma, she said. I thought I had out it in the trunk along with-the rest. She neld the black tress between her and the candle, her blue eyes softened, became childlike. She felt an urge to say something to her mother, she didn't quite know what. Her thoughts went fumbling here and there as a stranger might among the blind holes of a bog on a dark night. The pair of them would have to be in the one bed, the light out, and a wand of moonlight through the small window to charm and set free the tongue. She looked her mother in the eyes to see if she might find encouragement there, but she remained unconscious of her mother's seething emotions, locked within, quite unable to crack the fixed and rigid mask of her features.

She put on the light and gaudy coat, then

the wide-brimmed hat. Part of the preparations for her attack on life, she supposed, was to spend a long time fixing and refixing the set of the hat, though she had no idea which particular slant she wanted. She didn't realize that the size and the undulations of the hat brim added nothing to her good looks, nor that the vellow shoes, black hat, and red coat made a devil's own trinity, in conflict with her fresh and delicate features. But she was ready: hat, coat, low shoes on, and lady gloves -not to be taken off again. She felt strange. surprised as a butterfly that feels for the first time that it has shed its cramped caterpillar limbs and has the endless airy spaces unimpeded to sail through on easy wings. She felt, too, some of the lightheaded pride of the butterfly . . .

"Her lips would have been embittered by the berries from the Tree of Good and Evil. Experience, that slimy serpent, writhing in her mind. Such were all returned Americans."



Mairtin O Cadhain THE YEAR The mother forgot until the trunk had been locked that she had forgotten to put a bit of hen dirt in it, or somewhere among the daughter's clothing. But she wouldn't for the world unlock it again. She couldn't bear the daughter to make fun of her, this morning especially, accuse her of pishrogues and superstition. She shook a tint of holy water on her, and while she was putting the feather back in the bottle the daughter was off out to the kitchen floor to show off her. American ensemble.

HE SIDECAR hadn't come yet. There was a swirl of dancing. Tom Neile with his back to the closed door was singing "The Three Sons" in a drunken yoice drowning the music—

There's many a fine spa-a-rk young and hea-a-rty

Went over the wa-a-ter and ne-e-e-r return'd.

-Tone yourself down, said the mother to Tom, but she'd have given a deal just then to have a tune like he had in order to release the load of her love in a spilling song. The girls had gathered again about the daughter, scrutinizing her rigout, although they had been a week looking at it. They gave the mother no chance of keeping her company. They thought nothing, it seemed to her, of driving a wedge into nature, one almost as inhuman as that driven in by the immense cold sterile sea. The young women were chirruping of America. Chirruping of the life they'd have together soon in South Boston. Typical of a race whose guardian angel was the American trunk, whose guiding star was the exile ship, whose Red Sea was the Atlantic.

Bidin Johnny reminded her to ask her cousin to hurry with the passage money. Judeen Sheain told her on her life not to forget to tell Liam Pheige about the fun there was at the wake of old Cait Thaidhg.

—Take care you don't forget to tell our Sean that we have the Mountain Garth under potatoes again this year, said Sorcha Phaidin. He said when he was going that after him no one would ever again be born to the race that would attempt to sow it, it was such a hardship.

Tell my boy, Mairin, that it won't be long till I'll be over to him, Nora Phadraig Mhurcha said, in a whisper that all the girls heard.

—By cripes, it won't be long till I'm knocking sparks out of the paving stones of South Boston myself, said a redheaded youth whose tongue had been loosed by the drink.

—God help those that have to stay at home, said old Seamas O Currain.

The whiskey was circling again. —He now, you ought to take a taste of it, said Peai sin Shiubhaine, who was measuring it out, he ing the glass toward Mairin with a tremblir hand. He splashed some of it on her coat. — mouthful of it will do you no harm. Devil the drop of poteen you're likely to see for the re of your life. There was an undertone to h voice, he was remembering the five daughte of his own who were "beyond"—one of the thirty-five years gone—and he had no hope of ever seeing them again . . . —I'll drink it my self then. Your health, Mairin, and God brin you safe to journey's end.

Neither Peaitsin nor anyone else in the gatlering thought to add, —God send you sathome again. Such ignorance of the properting to say sparked off the mother's represse anger. —Five years from today you'll see he back home again, she said tartly.

—God grant it, said Peaitsin and Seaini

Thomais Choilm together.

—And she'll marry a moneyed man an stay here with us for good, laughed Citir Mairin's aunt.

—I'll have little or nothing to show after five years, said Mairin. But maybe you' marry me yourself, Seainin, without a six pence?

But by this time Seainin had huddled hin self back against the door and was talkin like a tornado to let the mockery of the youn girls pass over him.

—At all costs don't pick up an accent, sai a young lad, one of her cousins, —and don be "guessing" all round you like Micili Eamoinn, who spent only two months beyon and came home across the fields with nothin to show for his voyage but half a guinea and a new waistcoat.

—Nor asking, "What's that, mamma?" whe you see the pig.

—Anyhow, you'll send me my passage, sai Mairead, the next daughter to Mairin, eye sparkling.

—And mine too, said Norin, the next sister. The mother felt a bleak touch of her ow death hearing the greedy begging voices of the pair. Years of delay were being heape on her daughter's return, as shovelfuls of eart are heaped on a coffin. And the grace of the homecoming was receding from her—as far a Judgment Day. At that moment the childres she had given birth to were her greatest en emies.

She set Mairin to drink tea again, though she had just stood up from it. But she wanted to come close to her again. She must bread bread, make a farewell communion, weave the intimate bond of a farewell supper with he

laughter. She would tell her plain and straight hat she didn't believe this parting meal to be I funeral meal as far as home was concerned: here would be an Easter to come, before the judgment. But they weren't left to themselves. Her sister Citin with her family of daughters and some of the other girls pushed up to the able by the wall and in no time had Mairin engulfed among them.

HE DAUGHTER had no wish for food. Her face burned: desire, panic, wonder, an anguish of mind, all showed in her cheek. Brightcity was the farhest from home she had ever been, but she and been nurtured on American lore from inancy. South Boston, Norwood, Butte, Monana, Minnesota, California, plucked chords in per imagination more distinctly than did Dubin, Belfast, Wexford, or even places only a ew miles out on the Plain beyond Brightcity. ife and her ideas of it had been shaped and lefined by the fame of America, the wealth of America, the amusements of America, the agonizing longing to go to America . . . And hough she was lonesome now at leaving home t was a lonesomeness shot through and hrough with hope, delight, wonder. At last he was on the threshold of the Fairy Palace

. Tremendous seas, masts and yardarms, blazing lights, silver-toned streets, dark peoble whose skin gleamed like beetles, distortng for her already the outlines of garth,
nountain, rock, fiord. Her mind tonight was
tothing but a ragbag to keep the cast-off
shreds of memory in until she might shed
hem as flotsam as she sailed. She was so unyuarded now that she let herself be led out to
lance on the stone floor, dressed as she was
for America. In any case she couldn't have
ound it in her heart to refuse Padraigin Phailin

It irked her conscience that she had so long neglected him. She began to dance in a lackadaisical way, but the pulse of the musicthat music to which they were beholden even in the fairy place-excited an impulse in herself, and soon in her dappled outfit she was like a young alien deer, full-blooded, with the common young animals of the herd prancing about her, inciting her to show what she was made of, what she could do, while the elders sat around in sage contemplation. The mother was thinking that if she was ever to see her again the hard experience of life would then be a dead weight on that lust for dancing. In place of that passion of young and eager blood that wedded her limbs to the graceful movement of the stars, the thin and watery stuff of graying age would be keeping her tired bones "Indeed you'd fixed on earth.

Nevertheless the mother was closely watching not the daughter but Padraigin Phaidin, who was dancing with her. There and then she guessed the whole story. Easy to see. Very likely the pair had never said a word of love to each other. Very likely they hadn't said a word tonight. And they were likely never to say a word in their lives. But she realized they would be married in South Boston in a year's time, in five years, ten years even . . . She was vexed. That's what lay behind Padraigin's wild dancing fit. What she had failed to say in words he was saying in dance. Body and limbs he was enacting a perfect poem, with growing zest, abandon, vigor, and precision, until a lash of his nailed boot carved a spark out of the hearthstone in time with the final beat of the music. Some might put it down to intoxication, but the mother knew better. That spark was in fact a finishing touch, a final fling of the spirit in full victory. Then hardly waiting to be asked while still breathless from the dance he began with easy power to sing. And the mother forgot the daughter listening to

The garden's a desert, dear heart, and lonesome 1 be,

No fruit on the bough, no flower on the thorn, no leaf,

No harping is heard and no bird sings in the tree

Since the love of my heart, white branch, went to Cashel O'Neill.

A young spirit trying to crack the shell of a universe that shut it in, so fierce was his song. By now the mother had come to hate him. An evil being, fingering her own proper treasure . . .

Horse's hooves and the clatter of a sidecar were heard from the cart track outside. Music and merriment ceased suddenly. Only Seainin Tolan stretched drunk against the shut door still moaning

Ora, wora, wora, It's on the southern side of New York quay That I myself will land—

the only snatch of a song Seainin ever raised.

—Indeed you'd be a nice gift to America!
Devil drown and extinguish you, it's a pity it isn't on some quay you are, a useless hulk, instead of here, cried a youth who could stand him no longer.

The trunk was taken from the room and set like a golden calf on the table.

—Take out that and tie it up on the sidecar, said the mother.

"Indeed you'd be a nice gift to America! Devil drown and extinguish you, it's a pity it isn't on some quay you are, a useless hulk, instead of here!" Mairtin
O Cadhain
THE YEAR

—It might get broken, said Mairin. Leave it alone until I'm ready to go out along with it. That trunk was her license and authority to wear an elegant hat on her head and an ostentatious coat on her back instead of a shawl. Without the trunk her lady outfit would be an insult to God. If she let it out of her sight for as much as a second as like as not those tricksome and showy garments would wither into rags and ashes about her body.

HE TURNED NOW to say goodbye to those who hadn't the strength to accompany her as far as the king's highway. Crippled oldtimers who could barely manage to shuffle across the street; for most of them this was likely the last time they'd



leave their own firesides for a social occasio This was the first link of the chain to be jerke apart, it made her feel for the first time he hard the parting was, how merciless. Whatev about the rest of the people, she would nevset eyes on these again. In spite of her d tress and hurry she looked closely at each or of them so as to store up in her memory the shape and features. She kept a grip on h emotion and broke down only when she can to her grandmother at the hearth. She had much affection for her grandmother as sl had for her mother, and made more free wi her. And was loved in return. Never a wee went by but the old woman had laid aside bit of her pension to give her, whatever elmight be behindhand. The old creature w as speechless as if already turned to clay. fact she almost was, for the best part of his was in the grip of "the One with the thin has foot," and the rest waiting on busy death prepare her dwelling-place. Her mouth was dry as the timber of a new-shut coffin, ar except for a faint blinking of the evelids the brought her far-off look a little closer to the here and now. Mairin would have thought the she hadn't the least notion what was going o

—I'll never see you again, mammo, sl said, her voice breaking at last in tears.

-God is good, said the mother, a shac stubborn.

Then to kiss the small children and the i fant in the cradle. She felt it as a warm su stantial summer after the midwinter chil Charming her senses against the threat of the graveclothes.

The mother brought her off to the root once more. But they weren't long there to Citin and Mairead came in on them to give their shawls so as to accompany Mairin to Brightcity. The mother could have melte them. How officious they were—without then she thought, the lump of sorrow in her throwouldn't have hardened again. All she coursay to Mairin was that she'd have good earings; that she hoped they'd have good weater at sea; and for the life of her not to forg to have her picture taken beyond and send home.

—My own darling girl, she said picking speck of fluff from the shoulder of the co and giving a hurried quirk to the hat brir though the daughter at once reset it her ow way. And having glanced quickly round the house she was ready to go.

The sidecar went lurching down the rugge village track followed by a dense crowd, me women, and children. They had all the appea ance of a sacrificial procession: the sideca like a funeral pyre ahead, puffs of the men bacco smoke hanging in the early morning r, and Mairin walking in her barbaric cos-

me as the officiating druid.

The mother walked alongside the daughter id offered to carry her rug, but Brid Sheaais snatched it and carried it herself. She id determined to have Mairin under her own ing on this last walk, but Citin and her own airead thwarted her once more. Then all the oung girls closed around her, some chatterg and laughing, some so lonesome at her ing that they hadn't the heart to say much. id others sorry that they weren't in her place going along with her. By this time the other had hardly any feelings of regret left, angry was she with the rabble that wished deprive her of her daughter before she was en out of sight. She took a spleen against e sidecar too. It was moving as fast as if it ere giving a corpse "the quick trot to the aveyard." It seemed to her that it was the unk-perched up on the box of the car, its nber blond as an ear of corn in the rays of e virgin sun-that was pricking the horse death's own scything speed. She hadn't a ord left to say . .

There was a mild red light from the sun st up. Field walls and piles of stone grinned eakly. In the little pokes of fields slanting id rugged the tramped stubble was like the ead of some Samson having suffered the lears of Delilah. A small sailing boat just out om harbor with a fair wind scratched a ight wake down the fiord. Mairin looked ack from the rise at Hollycliff, from then on er own house and the village houses strung ound would be out of sight. Last year's new atch joined the old black and withered roof the ridge strip-a line of contact between e past and the time to come. And the vilge seemed asleep again after its brief secad of action, slight as a spit in the ocean that e sailing boat might obliterate.

The sidecar halted at the end of the track. he people formed a close group in the mouth the highway so that the mother was cut off om the daughter. Just another stray stone the cairn, that's all she was. The same as she were neither kith nor kin. More than er she begrudged Citin and Mairead their oing to Brightcity with Mairin. When the issing began the women were like a gaggle f scavengers about a prey. They pushed their ay rudely up to her daughter, squeezed her and, snatched kisses one after the other like flock of starlings on a trash heap. The men 100k hands with her, shy, laconic, seeming say it was all one, and if it had to be done ien it were best done as quickly as might be. 'adraigin Phaidin did likewise, but unlike the

rest of the men he gave the slightest lift to his head and the mother caught the eyes of the couple interlocked for the nick of a second.

T LAST IT WAS her turn. She hadn't kissed her daughter since she was a child. But she failed to put much yearning and anguish into the kiss, though her lips hungered for her. Hadn't she kissed all and everyone? Hadn't all and everyone got ahead of herself in the kissing and hugging? The daughter's kiss was cold and insipid, the good skimmed from it by all that had been pecking at her. Her body was cold, too, cold and insubstantial as a changeling from the Liss.

But what quite spoiled the kiss for her was the sight of the trunk; she was unable to keep her eyes off it and it was all but whispering in her ear—

No mortal kiss will break the spell of the changeling, seduced by pleasure to wander and forget, whose dwelling is the golden web that young desires weave from the sunlight on green hills far off from the here and now.

Mairin was now on the sidecar. Mairead sitting beside her, Citin next to the driver on the other side, Padraigin Phaidin fixing the trunk firmly between them up on the box. Damned spirits, they appeared to the mother—the accursed trunk, Mairead greedy to get her passage money, and Padraigin Phaidin on edge to get to America and marry her daughter—three damned spirits torturing her first-born and best-beloved.

Padraigin had finished and the people were moving aside to make way for the horse. The women started in to sob, and the sobbing lifted into a loud wail of words, expressing no real anguish the mother thought, beyond voice and tears. They wouldn't leave her even the comfort of keening alone. And she shed no tear...

She stammered uncertainly, —I'll see you before five years are out. And couldn't raise her eyes to meet the eyes of her daughter, not if the sky fell.

The car was now moving. Sobbing the daughter whimpered, —You will. But now the mother's heart as well as her common sense knew that she would not. Padraigin Phaidin would see her sooner and the girls of the village and her own children, even the infant then in her womb. The mother realized she was but the first of the nestlings in flight to the land of summer and joy: the wild goose that would never again come back to its native ledge.

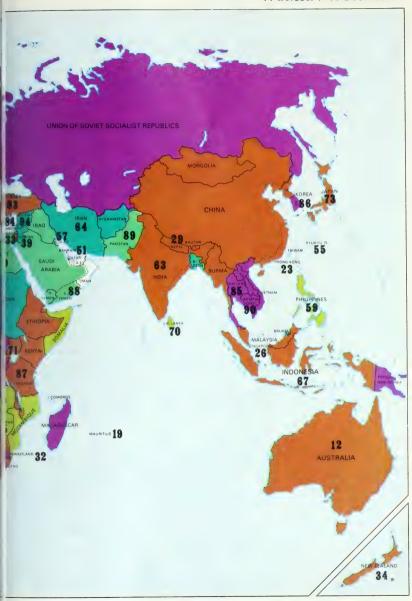
"It seemed to her that it was the trunk, perched up on the box of the car, that was pricking the horse to death's own scything speed."

HARPER'S SEPTEMBER 1981



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#### WOMEN WORKERS



lonald Segal, published by Simon & Schuster. Map copyright @ 1981 by Pluto Press Limited.

## PONY OR PEGASUS

#### The problem of mistranslation

by Joel Age

What is translation? On a platter A poet's pale and glaring head, A parrot's screech, a monkey's chatter

And profanation of the dead.

—Vladimir Nabokov

Bless thee, Bottom, bless thee!
Thou, art translated.

—A Midsummer Night's Dream,

HE CLOSER you look at a word," said Karl Kraus, the brilliant Viennese essayist and poet, "the more distantly it looks back at you." It's no different with the word "translation." It wriggles and swarms, it seems about to spawn implications, but which? Literally and etymologically, it means "to carry across." Carry what across where? Maybe if I tap it a little, give it a push... there: it falls apart neatly into two images, one political, the other religious.

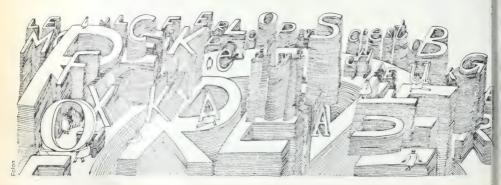
The political image is of a border crossing. The translator, returning Joel Agee is the fiction editor of Harner's.

from a trip abroad in his VW bug. Honda, or Fiat, is flagged down in front of his country's customs office. He presents his papers, which are all okay, but there in the backseat sits a shifty-eved, foreign-looking fellow, and this weirdo, this congenitally illegal alien doesn't just want to visit, he wants to emigrate! It's against the rules! But the translator vouches for him. Under his supervision, the gentleman in the back will be made to resemble normal people in speech and in manner: his mustache will be clipped. his gaudy tie removed, and with a lot of ingenuity and a little luck even the color of his skin will be blanched (or darkened) to an agreeably domestic hue. The customs officer is satisfied. He hands the newcomer a temporary visa. It's the critics who will eventually grant or refuse him permanent immigrant

The religious image is a sort of vision. It reminds me of certain allegorical paintings where everything

in the picture represents somethin else that isn't in the picture. I se a ferry transporting people (wh aren't really people, but poem phrases, speeches, novels) from or linguistic shore to another, across river of silence. Whoever falls int the river will be forgotten foreve No wonder these travelers are hole ing their breath; the only sound that of their garments flapping the wind. But as soon as they reac the shore they hop off, chattering arguing, orating, singing in the new language, and quickly blen into the native populace, ghos among the living. Hardly anyon seems to notice the difference, an among the few who do notice, n one seems to care. So many of th living, after all, are less than alivwhile some of the ghosts are sur posed to be immortal; you can get much more vital than that.

"And what about their livin souls?" asks a bewildered visitor.
Oh, they're still on the other shoutheir souls, their flesh and hone



verything. We refer to them as "the

"Not to be translated, ever?"

Never. Only the ghosts. Somemes several ghosts in a row. They
mpete with each other.

"In that case, why not visit the iginals where they are?"

Because it's too difficult. Because 's laborious. Because it's not ecomical. Because it's not popular. ecause it's not necessary. Because ar schools don't teach how to build ridges. We rely on the ferry.

Below is a great German poem bllowed by a recent American transtion:\*

Da stieg ein Baum. O reine Übersteigung! O Orpheus singt! O hoher Baum im Ohr!

Und alles schwieg. Doch selbst in der Verschweigung

ging neuer Anfang, Wink und Wandlung vor.

Tiere aus stille drangen aus dem klaren

gelösten Wald von Lager und Genist;

und da ergab sich, dass sie nicht aus List

und nicht aus Angst in sich so leise waren,

sondern aus Hören. Brüllen, Schrei, Geröhr

schien klein in ihren Herzen. Und wo eben

kaum eine Hütte war, dies zu empfangen,

ein Unterschlupf aus dunkelstem Verlangen

mit einem Zugang, dessen Pfosten beben,

da schufst du ihnen Tempel im Gehör.

A tree rising. What a pure growing!

Orpheus is singing! A tree inside the ear!

Silence, silence. Yet new buildings,

signals, and changes went on in the silence.

Animals created by silence came forward from the clear

\* Selected Poems of Rainer Maria Rilke, translated by Robert Bly. Harper & Row, \$14.95 (cloth), \$7.95 (paper). and relaxed forest where their lairs were,

and it turned out that the reason they were so full of silence was not cunning, and not terror,

it was listening. Growling, yelping, grunting now seemed all nonsense to them. And where before there was hardly a shed where this listening could go.

a rough shelter put up out of brushy longings, with an entrance gate whose poles were wobbly, you created a temple for them deep inside their ears.

To one who can read the original, this confrontation is like that of a beautiful girl with her reflection in a convex mirror—laughable, but also pathetic, since this is not a scene in an amusement park but pages 194–5 in Selected Poems of Rainer Maria Rilke, published by Harper & Row and englished by one of our most acclaimed poets and translators, Robert Bly.

Some of the distortions, I grant, are unavoidable. The simple words "ging...vor," for example, imply in their context at least three subtly related meanings—"occurred," "went forward," and "emerged"—so that Bly's "went on" would seem to do as well, or rather just as insufficiently, as a number of other English idioms.

Less excusable are completely needless departures from the literal and intended meaning of the German words, especially when the sacrifice yields no appreciable profit in tonal or rhythmic fidelity. "Da stieg ein Baum" can be easily and exactly rendered as "There rose a tree"; if Rilke had wanted to use the present participle, he could have done so. "Und alles schwieg" means "and all things were still," not "silence, silence." The rafters at the shelter's entrance do not "wobble," they guiver. The shelter itself is made "of darkest longing"; it is not "put up out of brushy longings." "Brüllen, Schrei, Geröhr" means "roaring, scream and howl" (more literally, "belling"), not the farmyard "growling, yelping, grunting" given by

Bly. And these utterances do not "seem all nonsense" to the animals; rather, they "are small within their hearts," which is an entirely different statement with a different meaning.

And what is one to make of "buildings, signals, and changes" in the first quatrain? A high-rise in the ear? A traffic junction in the primal forest? The German word for "building" is "Gebäude," and it does not appear in the poem, "Antang," however, which is in the poem, means "beginning," and I am beginning to suspect that Robert Bly, who has translated from the Finnish, Swedish, Japanese, Arabic, Spanish, and Hindi, does not know these languages very well, that he works from a pony, that the pony for this poem was handwritten or for some other reason illegible, that Bly read "building" instead of "beginning" and, seduced by what he took to be a fruitful obscurity, made the mistake of not checking the dictionary, On the other hand, Bly may have wanted to help Rilke create the temple in the poem's last line by hiring a construction crew in the third. Or else it's a typesetter's error, in which case I ask the translator and the publishers why such a blatant mistake wasn't caught.

This sonnet is not the only poem offended. The book is studded with similar pointless substitutions, such as "neurasthenic" for "pale," "really" for "almost," "gaily" for "gently," "powerful" for "feeling" or "sentient," "undisturbed" for "unassailed," "barn" for "village," "bore" for "disturb," "think of me" for "have merey on me," "excited" for "delighted," "O.K." for "good."

That last one is symptomatic of an unfortunate tendency of Bly's to translate not just into English but into a kind of long-haired, loose-jointed, sock-it-to-me vernacular, regardless of the source. Antonio Machado, Basho, Kabir, Vallejo, Neruda... sooner or later, at least for a moment, they all get to sound like groovy Californians. Thus Rilke's spirit-invoking Orpheus becomes "a shaman"—and we all know from Carlos Castaneda what that is. "I am still in my body" is occult hip-

talk for "I am still alive," and that is how Bly translates "Ich lebe noch." People who talk glibly about being in and out of the body also like to talk about cosmic. sexual. psychological, and unspecified "energies"; so does Bly's Rilke. "When the god's energy takes hold," he says at one point, but actually it's the divine example seizing hold. "The winged energy of delight" injects unneeded energy into "das geflügelte Entzücken"-"winged delight." A caged panther's circling is described as "a dance of energy" around the beast's stunned will. whereas in German it's a dance of strength. The exact German equivalent of "energy" is "Energie," and as far as I know Rilke never used it in a poem.

Once shamanic energies have been summoned up, the lure of the noble savage can't be far off. Sure enough, "ein Atemholen nach dem Ersten, Alten" is turned into "He takes a breath, as if reaching for the First ... "-so far so good, the next word should be "Old" or "Ancient," but here comes an irresistible chain of associations: First ... Prime ... Primal . . . — "Primitive." Nothing could be more alien to the refined and thoroughly civilized Rilke than this word and the unhewn roughness it suggests. If it appeared only once, it would be unreasonable to speak of a tendency, but the same mutation occurs earlier in the book, when "deine alten Winde" (plural, incidentally) becomes "your primitive wind"-which communicates, at least to this reader, a distinct whiff of flatulence.

There, in a nutshell, is the comedy of errors in this sad dance of incompatible partners: Rilke forever sublimating and hearkening back to the origins, Bly (presuming to mirror him) bluntly tackling the nittygritty basics; Rilke offering the priestly counsel to "Erect no epitaph," Bly loosening him up with "Don't bother about a stone"; Rilke rejuvenating a cliché, as in "nymph of the wept pool," Bly restoring it to senility with "water spirit of the pools of tears"; Rilke imagining "the eye-apples ripening" in the lost head of an archaic torso, Bly informing

us of a seemingly apoplectic set of "slowly swelling" eyeballs; Rilke chastely venturing into the erotic with "the god let himself loose into the beloved," Bly giving him a helping push with "he let the god loose into the darling woman."

Y INTENTION is not simply to draw into question one man's high reputation as a man s mgn reputation—a man, moreover, whose original poetry and inspirational public performances I admire-but to protest against the virtual absence of critical standards now applied to the art of translation, and against what amounts to a tradition, and a thriving one, of misrepresenting great works of literature for the sake of a good English read. Of course no defender of that tradition would put it in quite such a vulgar manner. But even if we speak of metempsychosis or transubstantiation, as some have or more plainly but no less sophistically of preserving the spirit while sacrificing the letter, the form, the manner, the content, and everything else (as if the spirit of a poem weren't embodied in the precise choice and ordering of words, images, sounds, even punctuation marks, that make it up)-the fact of willful distortion remains, and this is implicitly if not overtly acknowledged by the very terms of the apology, or of the fair warning, as the case may

Oxford University Press, for example, is currently lending its august imprint to the bizarre enterprise of "recreating the entire extant corpus of Greek tragedy as though it had been originally written by ancient masters wholly at home in the English language of our time." Hence the extraordinary banality of King Oedipus's opening words, like those of a petulant daddy sorting out a snafu at the family barbecue: "Why, children, why are you here, why are you holding those branches tied with wool, begging me for help?" The whining tone pervades the entire play, and so does the lanky American prose: "No, Oedipus. Consider it rationally, as I have. Reflect: What man, what sane man, would prefer a king's power with all its danger and anxieties, when he could of joy...." etc. Not a trace is left trimeters and kingly rhetoric.

Stephen Berg, a poet, and Disk Clay, a classical scholar, collaboration on the translation; William Arro smith who should know better dorsed it warmly in a preface the curiously, raises the question of co tural "colonialism" while exoner ing Berg and Clay from the charg What could be more plainly acqu itive and disrespectful of its foreign source than this translation's who sale Americanizing? One goal of the Oxford series, according to Arro smith, is to provide translations th are both speakable and playable the stage: but if this volume is reresentative what is really being pr moted is a theater of domestication It's no coincidence that a recent pr duction of Berg and Clay's Oedip. by the Brooklyn Academy of Mus reminded one reviewer of a mar gras.

Fame sets the standard. Whe Robert Bly and the Oxford Univer sity Press can proceed with impur ty, less prestigious publishers ar poets will follow-in droves, as ca be seen in any well-stocked boo store. Here is one particularly irritaing example: Songs and Sonne from Laura's Lifetime, by France [sic] Petrarch, translated by Nic olas Kilmer and published by Nort Point Press in San Francisco. The dust-jacket blurb unblinkingly pro fers forty-two translations-no te tale modifiers like "free" or "cr ative" here. The inclusion of the Italian poems on the left-hand page of the book suggests that these tran lations do not fear comparison wit the originals. Indeed they don't They defy it.

O poggi, o valli, o fiumi, o selve, o campi,

O testimon de la mia grave vita

Mr. Kilmer supplies the liter translation in his introductory note ("O hills, o valleys, o rivers, woods, o fields, o witnesses to meavy life") and dismisses it as is sufficient, for the reason that "threader is helpless trying to find the poetry." (Which reader? This reader



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We all owe a lot to must

has no trouble.) Petrarch, he explains, did not trust the evidence of the senses; that is why he left his hills, valleys, etc. "uncontaminated by adjectives." "We," on the other hand, tend to trust nothing else, which is why Kilmer takes it upon himself—as a service to "the modern reader"—to make sure they are contaminated with his own inventions:

My heavy life has become part of this country; Tamed hills, shallow rivers running through marble, Woods and fields.

"Of course," Mr. Kilmer concedes,
"... I am making him more American than he would want to be; far
more modern than he would want to
be." But that's all right: "Already in
the fourteenth century he was more
modern' than he wanted to be."

■ OME EFFORTS at literary cooptation succeed admirablytoo admirably. In the case of Omar Khayyam's "Rubáiyát," the translator's reputation has totally eclipsed the poet's, and anyone objecting that Fitzgerald's Horatian quatrains are not really translations from the Iranian will meet with warm rejoinder from Fitzgerald fans who feel, as one prefacer put it, that "they are English poetical work of fine quality, dashed with a pleasant outlandish flavour which heightens their charm." No contradiction in that, but somewhere in the background of all the acclaim is the almost inaudible murmur of an unknown Persian poem.

On an incomparably higher level of competence-on a more elevated plane of discourse as well-is the King James version of the Hebrew Bible. It would be foolish to impugn the perfection of its language, or its inestimable influence on the greatest of English writers, even its accuracy, despite some errors; but what relationship does its constant bell-like sonority, its majesty of phrase, its pomp-so befitting a high-minded Englishman in his pew-have to the orally transmitted sacred lore of a rough and unlettered desert tribe? Even the Word of God, after all, if we take it to be that, is conveyed to us by a human voice, and it ought to interest us just what the pitch and tone of that voice are, and what are the intimate modulations of its message.

It won't do, therefore, to attend above all else "to the rhythms and images in English," as Stephen Mitchell did out of a wish "to make Job into a living poem" (Into the Whirlwind, Doubleday, 1979), readable though his version is, and, according to Bible scholars who have approved it, philologically sound; it won't do, especially when some of the verse comes out like doggerel:

Does God make straightness crooked or turn truth upside down? Your children were very wicked: He punished them for their crimes. But if you are pure and righteous...

Nor will it do to translate the Bible into the bland and supermarket-modern prose of, say, the Good News Bible. Nothing less will do, it seems to me, than to attempt in English what Martin Buber and Franz Rosenzweig aimed at in their German Bible translation: "Not to Germanize the Hebrew [as Luther already had]...but to Hebraize the German."

Fortunately, the attempt has been made, by a young American scholar, Everett Fox, whose translation of the Hebrew Bible, closely based on the Buber-Rosenzweig version, is due to be published by Schocken Books in 1982. Fox prefers to call it a rendition, by which he means "that its language is not geared to English style but rather to the style of Biblical Hebrew":

hated-one,
and he opened her womb,
but Rahel remained hardenedof-root.
So Lea became pregnant and
bore a son,
and called his name: Reuven/
Son's-Sight,
for she said:
HE has seen my being-afflicted,
indeed, now my husband will
love me.

HE saw that Lea was the

This is not beautiful English littature. It is not literature at all br an effort to mold and bend Englidiction until it approximates tword order, sentence structure, alrhythms of the original text—whi was spoken, not written.\* And thwork of approximation has to be cottinued—it can never be completed by the reader. That is what I mear earlier, when I spoke of bridge building: a movement by the reader, it know only a few works of translation that offer this kind of service

In 1960, the World Publishir Company issued The Poem Itself, a anthology of more than 150 origin French, German, Spanish, Port guese, and Italian poems, accomp nied by literal renderings and e planatory discussions aimed, in the words of Stanley Burnshaw, the eitor, at "enabling the reader both understand the poem and to begin experience it as a poem," The poe itself, not its translation. Any reade willing to make the effort can appris himself of this method's extraord nary success. Even a Russian poer by Alexander Blok can be read heard, and felt by a reader u acquainted with the Cyrillic alphabe thanks to an exact phonetic trail scription. Guides to pronunciation are given for each of the other five languages. It is a pity that a phone graph record could not have bee produced to accompany this bool as Burnshaw had wished.

Some critics have raised the objetion that only poets are fit to tran late poetry, and that the approac recommended by Burnshaw offelittle more than a pony. Burnshaw reply strikes me as both fair and judicious:

There are, of course, various ways of approaching foreign poetry; when a writer uses one, he does not thereby surrender his right to use others. Those of us who are drawn to particular poems in other languages will always be free to revivify them with English verses—and as one

<sup>\*</sup> Most users of the Hebrew Bibl Buber points out, miss the spokenne implicit in "Scripture," so it's litt wonder that translators miss it as wel

of this group, I applaud the practice and hail the occasional achievements. But these are personal preoccupations, and translation is of public concern. English versions of foreign writings abound, but the reader who wants to experience the poetry of other literatures must look elsewhere; the vast stock of verse translations provides no answer.

provides no answer, above all, beuse "a verse translation... takes e reader away from the foreign litature and into his own, away from e original and into something difrent. The instant he departs from e words of the original, he departs om its poetry."

The Poem Itself is now out of

N The Art of Chinese Poetry

Press,

(Chicago University

int.

1962), James J.Y. Liu offers translations of several classical ninese poems. Being a scholar, not poet, Liu does not presume to reeate Chinese poems in English. Inead he wants to acquaint his reads with the poems themselvesspite our probably complete igrance of the language. Ignorance Chinese poetry as well, for anyne who has read Ezra Pound's, Arur Waley's, Burton Watson's, or itter Bynner's translations from e Chinese will have been left with e impression that Chinese poets a iousand and more years ago wrote free verse, in fact surprisingly like zra Pound. None of the famous nglish translations came facing the riginal text. If they had, the simple ght of it would have served as an nplacable corrective to the translaor's infidelities, and the reader, no onger naïve, would have asked himelf: "What else am I missing?"

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Following each original poem, and in addition to abundant commentaries concerning the principles of versification, the auditory effects of Chinese, grammatical aspects of the special language of poetry, etc., Liu supplies a transcription of the sound of the poem, a word-for-word translation, and finally a verse translation that follows the original rhyme scheme and reflects the number of Chinese syllables in each line with the same number of stresses in English. I find his translations less felicitous as English poems than some of the best of Waley's and Pound's. but that is irrelevant. The treasure is locked in those Chinese characters, and Liu has given us a jingling set of keys along with much friendly advice. The rest is up to the reader.

Yueh Hsia Tu Cho

Moon-beneath Alone Drink

Hua chien yi bu chiu
Flowers-among one pot wine
Tu cho wu hsiang ch'in (ts'ien)
Alone drink no mutual dear
Chü pei yueh ming yueh
Lift cup invite bright moon
Tuei ying ch'eng san jen (nzien)
Face shadow become three men
Yueh chi pu chieh yin
Moon not-only not understand
drink

Ying t'u suei wo shen (sien)
Shadow in-vain follow my body
Chan pan yueh chiang ying
Temporarily accompany moon
with shadow

With shadow

Hsing lo hsü chi ch'un (ts'iuen)

Practise pleasure must catch

spring

Wo ko yueh p'ai-huai
I sing moon linger-to-and-fro
Wo wu ying ling luan (luan)
I dance shadow scatter disorderly
Hsing shih t'ung chiao huan
Wake time together exchange joy
Tsui hou ko fen san (san)
Rapt-after each separate disperse
Yung chieh wu-ch'ing yu
Always tie no-passion friendship
Hsiang ch'i miao yun-han (xan)
Mutual expect distant Cloud-river

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by Wayne Biddle
Illustrations by David Suter

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\_THE VIKING PRESS-

#### Drinking Alone Beneath the Moon

A pot of wine before me amidst the flowers:

I drink alone—there's none to drink with me.

Lifting my cup to invite the brilliant moon,
I find that with my shadow we

are three.

Though the moon does not know

how to drink,

And my shadow in vain follows

Let me have their company for the moment.

For while it's spring one should be care-tree.

As I sing, the moon lingers

As I dance, my shadow seems to fly.

When still sober we enjoy ourselves together;

When rapt with wine we bid each other good-bye. Let us form a friendship free

Let us form a friendship fr from passions And meet again in yonder

And meet again in yonder distant sky!

One final example: Vladimir Nabokov translated Pushkin's "Eugene Onegin" (Princeton University Press. 1964) into a rigorously literal and consequently rather ugly English version accompanied by a vast exegetical commentary that offers biographical data, literary sources, prosodical niceties, philological explorationseverything except the beauty of Pushkin's poem. This omission is not a failure but a refusal, as should be obvious from the several beautiful (if not entirely faithful) translations of Russian poems Nabokov gave us long before he translated "Onegin." Critics who complained about the "unreadability" of this English version were missing its point completely. It was never meant to be read and enjoyed as a poem. A bridge is prized for its serviceability. Failing that, what beauty it may have is inconsequential—at least for those who wish to cross it. Like Liu's, and like Burnshaw's smaller but no less careful constructions, Nabokov's enormous bridge, footnote pylons and all. makes the poem on its foreign shore accessible to English readers, provided they care to exert themselves and make the trek.

What is the value of such sharp quarrel about words? Why raise an alarm about a possible missing nuance or some discarded notion that may once have been carefully worded? Why bother? Who cares?

These questions are worth considering. Reading poetry isn't a popular American pastime, granted; and graver problems beset the world, political and social quandaries that make these aesthetic issues seem trivial But are they merely aesthetic? In the case of Petrarch or Omar Khavvam, the losses incurred through mistranslation are ours alone, so the charge of "colonialization" would seem inappropriate-but something of a psychology of plunder may operate even here. It may be that the casual arrogance with which one culture translates the literary treasures of another culture into its own terms is not unconnected with the equally sanctioned tradition of fleecing weaker nations and bargaining partners of their material treasures. Certainly when the language one is translating from belongs to a people that is subject to one's own-any one of the hundreds of nations and languages, say, that have been subsumed under the brutal misnomer "American Indian"—the problem of mistranslation ceases to be aesthetic and becomes a threat to survival, at least for the victims.

We are all acquainted with the marvelous mechanism by which the most vicious social practice, once it is sanctioned by tradition, becomes compatible with the most virtuous motives: slavery with charity, the torture of animals with the quest for scientific truth, male supremacy with protective solicitude, state tyranny with the passion for justice, pollution of nature with a concern for progress. So it is not hard to imagine that generosity, even a kind of respect, may have prompted an anonymous Redcoat scribe to translate Tecumseh's address to the Choctaws and Chickasaws, dated 1811, in such a way as to make the Shawnee chief resemble a Tory pontificating before Parliament, all Latinate bombast and soundy redundancy:

Do you imagine that that people will not continue longest in the enjoyment of peace who timely prepare to vindicate themselves, and manifest a determined resolution to do themselves right whenever they are wronged? Far otherwise. Then haste to the relief of our common cause, as by consanguinity of blood you are bound....

I wonder whether it would ha been possible to translate this ba into the Shawnee language, and so, whether Tecumseh would ha recognized himself in it or found unutterably strange. The speech reproduced in Indian Oratory (Un versity of Oklahoma Press, 1971 W. C. Vanderwerth, who edited to book, says "it is quite likely that t translations were very much as the speakers gave them, for the inte preters were trusted men and wolen, chosen because they could depended upon." Trusted by whon! Depended upon for what? He metions for the record that "some the Indians" weren't thrilled by t sound of their own words, disfigure and robbed of their intended sens rolling off the conqueror's tongue.

Is the problem of mistranslation more academic, less radical problem when the victim is "merely" a text I don't think so. When Nichol Kilmer divests Petrarch of his au tere disdain for the senses, declaring it to be nothing but a garment (ar what if it were?); when Robert B supplants Rilke's "the last village words . . . a last homestead of fee ing" with "the final barn of laguage . . . a final granary of feeling -does not a destruction of mythe take place, of concepts, ideas, ar emotions? Such damage is not ne ligible, for it reaches beyond the co venient categories of the social, the political, and the aesthetic. Work are never mere words, not in life ar not in art. We live in language, vi take pleasure from it, we kill with we suffer its diseases, we manipula each other with it, and by means translation we have the freedom render homage or violence to the strangers laboring with us at the tower of Babel.

HARPER'S/SEPTEMBER 19

### ARS POLITICA

by Steven Brodner



## LOTS OF MOTS

Eighty-five hours with Mr. Proust

by Jeffrey Burb

Remembrance of Things Past, by

Volume I: "Swann's Way" and "Within a Budding Grove," 1,040 pages, translated by C. K. Scott Moncrieff and Terence Kilmartin.

Volume II: "The Guermantes Way" and "Cities of the Plain," 1,197 pages, translated by C. K. Scott Moncrieff and Terence Kilmartin.

Volume III: "The Captive," "The Fugitive," and "Time Regained," 1,128 pages, translated by C. K. Scott Moncrieff, Terence Kilmartin, and Andreas Mayor.

Random House, each volume \$25; boxed set \$75.

It is of course justifiable for the man who draws up reports, adds up figures, answers business letters, follows the movements of the stock exchange, to feel an agreeable sense of superiority when he says to you with a sneer: "It's all very well for you; you have nothing better to do."

—Cities of the Plain, vol. II, p.

ORDS, which can lull an abecedarian into day-dreaming of summer vacation and humming the season's anthem to No more pencils/No more books, or can compel a Freud or a Joyce to levy his syntax on words' ex-why-zeductive import with an artful genius, offered Marcel Proust the means of capturing and letting us see the world in a wet crumb of pastry as well as the truth Jeffrey Burke writes the "In Print" column in monthly alternation with Frances Taliaferro.

of so many moments when the heart and mind waltz carefully along the crowded bank that rarely witnesses a slip into-though it gradually inclines toward—the stream of selfconsciousness, for which distracted dancing nearly every page of A la recherche du temps perdu chides us with an epic remembering that folds back on itself and finds the ill, aging narrator of the last section resolving to do Time one better by recreating the minutiae of experience; and those words (to return to our nominal subject), not least of all the 1.5 million or so that populate the 3,365

pages of the new three-volume ed tion of Remembrance of Things Powhich appeared in bookstore w dows this summer almost lost in to thick shadows east by beach bar passing outside the glass and Micheners and Clavells stacked his inside—and that began their lives another language, thereby requiring an epic journey into English unde taken in the Twenties by C. K. Sca Moncrieff, when only a difficult at corrupt text was available, and a traced in the Seventies-with an er on improvement made possible by properly edited French text pu-



hed in 1954-by another British holar, Terence Kilmartin (whose hievement would seem to require me validation by comparison with oncrieff, if not with the original as ll, although here I confess to a el of French that barely exceeds e ability to write or say with conlence that I have lost my umbrella the library or, with anxiety, that e beach in Jean's bathroom is very cient, despite which fact I am enuraged to proceed by the inability several highly qualified translaes and critics to agree on the new ition's technical merits, however animous their general enthusiasm). man-Mr. Kilmartin, that is-to envied for having read Proust's sterpiece more than once, unlike vself, whose one-time, albeit rent, consumption of the whole, beles giving me an idea of monastic e and my friends' frequent recourse the telephone in order to confirm continued existence, also dragged t of coma a layman's reverence for erature that now wants only to sit d savor merely as a satisfied readall the many delicious moments emory flits among, that grants the nolars their explications and theies without hoping to supplant or pplement them, and that must ren itself to the occasion's obvious ith: words-yes, the twice-aforeentioned and seemingly abandoned minative, coming home to roostnnot ever convey to the uninitiated nat Proust hath wrought\*; but, radoxically, words seem sufficient the task of registering a few comaints, such as, to start in a minor v, the terrible injustice of, on the e hand, letting the charming, longffering Swann die at all, even anuncing his imminent demise to the utally indifferent Duke and Duchs of Guermantes as they rush off a party (death being, for Proust, e great instructor that inflicts its ssons by removing most of the ok's worthier characters, such as Very well, then, I contradict myself.

Very well, then, I contradict myself, we books worth keeping on top of your sed set of Proust are Marcel Proust, Roger Shattuck, in the Viking Mod n Masters series (1974, \$2.95), and roust, by Samuel Beckett (Grove Press, 31, \$2.45), discouraging to the newmer but illuminating to the initiated.

the intelligent, thoughtful, inverse [i.e., homosexual] Saint-Loup, the great actress Berma, forced out of retirement and into a dramatic death by her greedy daughter and son-inlaw, the worthy writer Bergotte, and sweet, anxious Grandmother), while, on the other hand, permitting the monstrous ass that is Madame Verdurin to survive throughout the work: or, to modulate lexically, the unfortunate repetition of the word antractuosity (and in this forced march to the dictionary also lies a reminder of the frustratingly inconsistent notes found, with a synopsis and unincluded passages derived from the work of the 1954 editors, at the end of each volume, notes that select for explanation only a portion of the many historical and literary unknowns); or, to pull out all the stops, the accumulated drudgery that reading about Albertine became in much of The Captive and The Fugitive, making me consider briefly the idea -truly a sacrilege in the face of the enduring possession each volume represents in its fine printing and binding-of hurling the third volume across the room (as S. J. Perelman was moved to do with Stan Gébler Davies's vile biography of James Jovce), an action, I realized, as the violent impulse faded, that would have punished the innocent final section, Time Regained, before I'd given Proust a chance to redeem himself, which he does wonderfully (and the praise extends to Andreas Mayor. who translated this last installment in 1970, drawing on the 1954 edition, with only slight emendations to the present text by Mr. Kilmartin) in both the long discussion of the aesthetic ideas that inspired and shaped the whole work, and in the brilliant final party (with Berma's empty salon in counterpoint), which the character we might as well call Marcel attends after years of illness spent away from society and which so sharply conveys the human aging process as seen in his former dinner companions while summarizing the last stages of the disintegration of a social organism he had years earlier battened on; or, at last, to foot the pedals most basically with this final complaint, that to the flighty organs

of perception some part of us must ever act as a sort of counterweight, ready to check the mind's eve from wandering, the nose from turning up at, or running after, those thoughtful nonscents that waft from a book as sensuous as A la recherche, even though no buttock so softly couched. no legs so nimbly crossed, no spine so supple or deformed can accommodate the hours of small, sharp, relentless discomfort to which the perdurable reader is sentenced, vet in the penalty finding himself, rightly or wrongly, that much more sympathetic to the exquisite bedsores Proust must have suffered in his confinement; though words may suffice (to pick up the slippery subject once more) to dispel the impression that Proust is impossible to read because he wrote such long, anfractuous sentences-and this seems as good a place as any to recall, if not for personal mitigation then for historical interest, Donald Barthelme's short story entitled "Sentence," which fills without a period or full stop pages 113 through 121 of the collection City Life, published in paperback by Bantam Books in 1971 and carrying for some portion of the printing's distribution a bound-in advertisement soliciting eight-month subscriptions to Harper's magazine at a cost of \$2.83, which 8 issues are said to contain "nearly 600,000 words"-when, in fact, A la recherche (to the shame of Bartlett's Familiar Ouotations and its mere two and a half columns of mostly lengthy Proust) offers myriad samples of bite-sized and briefly lovely Proust, beginning with the following image summing up the family housekeeper Françoise's peculiarities of speech and letting the others speak for themselves-

...her vocabulary, like certain cut stones, [showed] thus on certain of its facets a flaw which projected a ray of darkness into the recesses of her mind.

On the boughs of the trees, the last clinging leaves, shaken by the wind, followed it only as far as their stems would allow, but sometimes these broke and they fell to the ground, along which they coursed to overtake it.

For the truth is so variable for each of us, that other people have difficulty in recognising what it is.

Love is no more perhaps than the diffusion of those eddies which, in the wake of an emotion, stir the soul.

But error is more obstinate than faith and does not examine the grounds of its belief.

People are not always very tolcrant of the tears which they themselves have provoked.

Love is space and time made perceptible to the heart.

Let us leave pretty women to men with no imagination.

... the force that circles the earth most times in a second is not electricity but pain. It is the tragedy of other people that they are merely showcases for the very perishable collections of one's own mind.

Snobbery is with certain people analogous to those beverages in which the agreeable is mixed with the beneficial

A work in which there are theories is like an object which still has its price-tag on it.

When, on a summer evening, the melodious sky growls like a tawny lion, and everyone is complaining of the storm, it is the memory of the Méséglise way that makes me stand alone in ecstasy, inhaling, through the noise of the falling rain, the lingering scent of invisible lilacs.

-penultimately, the foregoing won from the original in emended tra lation carry with their syntactic c sure the salutary effect of slappi me out of the sweet page-turning delirium into which a compulsi reading of A la recherche had sul a mind certainly too receptive perhaps not too retentive, to jud from the whole episodes it cann summon up for curious friends for private reexamination, and from the reassurance it rushes to embranamely that the strength of the ov all impression sufficiently outweis any absentmindedness (and still, if to lessen the sting of this selfflicted blow to its pride, the sale brain, cued by word, calls up one Joyce's pregnant, puzzling ambig ties, expressed by Leopold Bloom shy, maybe careless corresponde Martha Clifford, whose letter red in part: "... I do not like that other world. Please tell me what is the ra meaning of that word"); final, words are most often simply shortest distance in space and till between two points of thought, er tion, or perception, whether the points are writ small to remove need any reader might feel to p vide an explanation for the time la in discovering Proust-about eightfive solid hours for the average reiler-or writ large, as Proust wris them into every detail, grandly, mandingly, and memorably from the first word to the last period.

UKIYO - E

by Siv Cedering

What explanation is given for the phosphorus light That you, as boy, went out to catch When summer dusk turned to night. You caught the fireflies, put them in a jar, Careful to let in the air, Then you fed them dandelions, unsure Of what such small and fleeting things Need, and when Their light grew dim, you Let them go.

There is no explanation for the fire
That burns in our bodies
Or the desire that grows, again and again,
So that we must move toward each other
In the dark.
We have no wings.
We are ordinary people, doing ordinary things.
The story can be told on rice paper.
There is a lantern, a mountain, whatever
We can remember.

Hiroshige's landscape is so soft.

What child, woman, would not want to go out
Into that dark, and be caught,
And caught again, by you?

Let these pictures of the floating world go on
Forever, but when
My light must flicker out, catch me,
Give me whatever a child imagines
To keep me aglow, then
Let me go.

HARPER'S/SEPTEMBER 11

# Love, Hate &

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## IN OUR TIME

by Tom Wolfe

#### The Evolution of the Species



1891



No. 5: The Evening Promenade

1981

## MIND READING

ie forgotten Freud

by Peter Gay

I discovered the unsigned review at follows in an obscure Austrian dical journal, the Grazer medizische Vierteljahresschrift, XVIII, 3 uly 1900), 139–48. As far as I can scover, it has been wholly oversked in the voluminous literature Freud and appears here in Engh, in my translation and with my notations, for the first time.

HIS IS A brilliant, disturbing, and for all its suavity, difficult book. Dr. Sigmund Freud is a noted, somewhat ntroversial Viennese neurologist to first established his reputation medical circles with a monograph aphasia nine years ago. Since en, in private practice as a specialin nervous disorders, he has rerded some spectacular cures for steria. But his unorthodox methls of treatment, which conform to nat he calls the "cathartic techque," have aroused some skepism. In 1893, Dr. Freud hinted the directions his medical thinkg was taking by publishing a "Preninary Communication" with a stinguished Viennese specialist, Dr. sef Breuer; two years later, he and r. Breuer offered further theoretal considerations and five new case stories in Studies on Hysteria. ince then, as those who follow the iennese professional journals will low, Dr. Freud has taken his ideas r beyond the Studies. There, after Gay teaches history at Yale University d is the author, most recently, of Freud, ws and Other Germans: Masters and Vicns in Modernist Culture.

fronting the orthodox wisdom that nearly all mental aberrations are hereditary or signs of physiological degeneration, he argued that mental aberrations are more often (though, to do him justice, by no means always) psychological in origin. Hysterics, Freud and Breuer put it bluntly, "suffer mainly from reminis-

cences." These heresies now prove to be but a pale prologue to Dr. Freud's most recent notions, as expansively presented in *The Interpretation of Dreams*.

In several recent papers, notably "Sexuality in the Aetiology of the Neuroses" (1898), Dr. Freud has proposed an erotic origin for several



From Signand Freud by Ralph Steadman, Copyright @ 1979 by Ralph Steadman.

forms of nervous disorder, thus inviting charges of reductionism and from some readers, of downright obscenity. In the present book, he attaches these theories to an entirely different field of mental activity. Dr. Freud's ambition, to judge especially from the last (and most difficult) section of his new monograph, is to provide an explanation not merely for some nervous illnesses but for all mental functioning. The book's last section, complete with some indecipherable diagrams, offers nothing less than a sketchy outline of a theory of mind. Evidently, Dr. Freud, the nerve specialist, is setting up as a general psychologist. He is not the first physician of the mind to have been lured by the siren of universal mental knowledge.\*

O UNLOCK THE mysteries of the mind, Dr. Freud has chosen a strategy that must strike the informed reader as venturesome, if not perverse, "In the pages that follow," he promises in the opening sentence. "I shall bring forward proof that there is a psychological technique which makes it possible to interpret dreams, and that, if that procedure is employed, every dream reveals itself as a psychological structure which has a meaning and which can be inserted at an assignable point in the mental activities of waking life." Dr. Freud confidently presents himself as a serious researcher, and his book displays all the stigmata of the scientific monograph: a review of the literature, footnotes, bibliographies. In the preface he explicitly calls himself "a man of science and not a poet." The reader may wonder.

After all, by fastening on dream interpretation as his master guide to mental life, Dr. Freud has entered a realm normally occupied by su-

perstitious servant girls who keep "dream books" on their bedside tathes. Dr. Freud is aware of the rather harre company he is keeping: "I have been driven to realize," he writes, "that here once more we have one of those not infrequent cases in which an ancient and jealously held popular belief seems to be nearer the truth than the judgement of the prevalent science of today." It remains to be seen whether this conviction reveals exceptional daring or merely exceptional gullibility.

If the choice of subject makes Dr. Freud's claim to science problematic, the almost obtrusive literary form and devices he employs make it more problematic still. For all his denials, he is something of a poet. In one of the case histories he published in 1895, he said, a little pathetically, "I have not always been a psychotherapist. Like other neuropathologists, I was trained to employ local diagnoses and electro-prognosis, and it still strikes me myself as strange that the case histories I write should read like short stories and that, as one might say, they lack the serious stamp of science." This book does not dissolve Dr. Freud's dilemma. The very shape of his new monograph-with its intimate anecdotes, tantalizing glimpses of autobiography, scattering of bons mots. and disarming disclaimers-places it in a class by itself, making it part novella, part essay, part special pleading. If it remains a difficult book, that is precisely because Dr. Freud presents an extremely complex argument-about how dreams workand, beyond that, as I say, reaches for a complete theory of mind.

The logical form of The Interpretation of Dreams is, I believe, that of a circle, with the long concluding chapter returning to the comprehensive bibliographical survey of the opening chapter. Dr. Freud restates his precursors' theories about dreams in order to argue that while many of them have something to offer, all of them are ultimately wanting and must be replaced by his own psychoanalytic theory. This sustained dramatic logic of the circle firmly undergirds the entire structure of The Interpretation of Dreams, de-

spite its glittering decoration.\*

The book's anecdotal, witty, ad confessional character is unorthody, to say the least, but its purposes persuasion. Whatever future sciptific researches will prove, we may now concede that Dr. Freud is a advocate of the greatest skill. I spect that if there should ever but need for popular versions of a ideas Dr. Freud will be the one's provide them.\*\*

Such popularization will undotedly be made easier by his aubiographical bent. Certainly writers laying claim to the nation of scientist have made as free, at as profitable, a use of self-disclose as Dr. Freud. In discussing "Dream of Irma's Injection," instance—the so-called "specim dream," which he reports at so length and then analyzes in gradetail to reveal his method—bereud enters into some intimate, at by no means always savory, detall about his personal life. The dreat of course, is his own.

At the same time, Dr. Freud teashis readers rather unfairly: he breaders in what appears to be the midsof his revelations, suddenly over the same time. The case of every dream of my own restraine from pursuing my interpretations. If anyone should feel tempt to express a hasty condemnation my reticence, I would advise himmake the experiment of being frank than I am."

This reviewer feels tempted to 6 press just such a condemnation 1 the author's reticence, and does 1

<sup>\*</sup> In view of how little this anonymous reviewer could have read of Freud by 1900, and since none of Freud's confidential correspondence with his colleague Wilhelm Fliess was available to him, this is a prescient observation. Freud certainly saw all his specialized work, whether with dreams or with patients, as an aspect of a larger ambition to produce a general theory of the mind.

<sup>\*</sup> While there is no evidence that Micel Proust ever heard of Freud's Interpretation of Dreams, it is tantalizing a conjecture whether he, that psychologiamong novelists, perhaps did read to book. The famous circular line of A recherche du temps perdu, with the nator's decision, at the end of the work to devote himself to writing a novel—novel that the reader has just read—bes a more than casual resemblance to with the reviewer calls, perhaps a little ptentiously, Freud's dramatic logic.

<sup>\*\*</sup> Right once more: Freud in fact ptlished a number of popularizations, fro the comprehensive *Introductory Lectus* to brief articles for encyclopedias, all f them models of lucidity.

nk it hasty. Dr. Freud's defense ems disingenuous: no one had ked him to draw on his own dreams scientific material.

It seems oddly conventional, in s most unconventional of neurolists, to stop the flow of disclosure at when it promises to become ally interesting. On Dr. Freud's rn showing, a more penetrating alysis of this "Irma" dream would we led him, and his readers so, straight into his sexual life.\*

т is Dr. Freud's insistence on the centrality of sexual passion in the making of men's minds that will prove most offensive, t perhaps-if we may be allowed e pun-most fertile. The connecon between dreams and sexuality. we follow his reasoning correctly, provided by the crucial role of the sh in mental life. In fact, Dr. eud defines the dream one recalls waking (and all that stands bend it to make the dream possible the first place) as desire, and sire gratified. "Its content was the Ifillment of a wish," he writes, "and motive was a wish."

The argument that he leaves here rgely implicit—and one can only sh that he had made it explicit, r reviewers, too, have wishes—ems to run as follows: man is a shing animal. Beginning in earest childhood, a phase of human velopment to which Dr. Freud idently assigns considerable imprance, the little boy (to conntrate solely on males for the oment) wants to love his mother disturbed by rivals, and finds his ther in the way of his desire.

According to Dr. Freud, "Being love with the one parent and ating the other are among the esnitial constituents of the stock of sychical impulses which is formed the time. . . . It is the fate of all of sperhaps," he goes on to say, "to treet our first sexual impulse to-

wards our mother and our first hatred and our first murderous wishes against our father." We take it that the "perhaps" in this statement functions as a piece of self-protection. since the assertion is, even with the qualification, really rather appalling. Dr. Freud tries to buttress his extraordinary imaginative portraval of amorous and murderous little boys by leaning, a little quaintly, on the authority of Sophocles' tragedy Oedipus Rex. He also professes to find the same incestuous triangle at work in Hamlet. Why not, we may ask, in The Brothers Karamazov?\*

Dr. Freud argues that although these wishes cannot be fulfilled, they persist, soon appearing immoral and indecent to the child who holds them. And so they are pushed out of awareness-"repressed," in Dr. Freud's term-and prevented from reaching consciousness by what Dr. Freud calls, in one of his many felicitous metaphors, the "censorship." At night, when the censorship itself is somewhat somnolent (like an armed border guard dozing while on duty), the repressed wishes, still alive later in life and often urgent, struggle toward consciousness. In this way they are the true, or ultimate, cause of the dream.

HAT DR. FREUD is asserting here is nothing less than staggering. and the skepticism he is sure to encounter in the medical profession should come as no surprise to him. First, he claims that there is a part, a very important part, of our minds of which we are wholly unaware, and which acts behind the scenes, alert, powerful, insatiable. Some modern thinkers, notably Eduard von Hartmann, have developed veritable philosophies of the unconscious, but for Dr. Freud, no philosopher, the unconscious appears to be a concrete psychological structure, laid down in childhood and never dissolved. Surely this is the most radical possible version of a dubious romantic idea. Dr. Freud, for all his debt to positivist thinking, may be the last romantic.\*

No less radical is Dr. Freud's assertion that sexuality shows itself first not at puberty, as all our best physicians and alienists have maintained, but soon after birth. "A child's sexual wishes—if in their embryonic stage they deserve to be so described—awaken very early," he writes. Once again we may note Dr. Freud's tactical caution. The implication of all his thinking is that embryonic or not, a child's wishes for love can only be described as sexual.

At the same time, we note that Dr. Freud's argument on this important point is neither complete nor consistent. He can write, surprisingly enough: "We think highly of the happiness of childhood because it is still innocent of sexual desires," And yet in our judgment his theory calls for infantile sexuality, nothing less. If he rather obscures the issue with such asides, we can only explain his hesitation as a residual embarrassment in the face of a proposition that shocks even its author. No less than the rest of us, Dr. Freud is a citizen of the nineteenth century—he is, we are told, in his mid-forties-and while he seems perfectly willing, almost eager, to offend the Podsnaps of our time, and bring blushes to the cheeks of the young, he is properly a little dismayed by his own theories.

For all his preoccupation—some would say obsession—with sexuality, infantile or adult, Dr. Freud must be acquitted of the charge of pan-sexualism.\*\* After all, the little boy in Dr. Freud's "oedipal" phase does not only love. He also hates. And it seems inescapable, on Dr. Freud's own showing, that the latter emotion is as fundamental a human impulse as the former. But on this

<sup>\*</sup>True enough, as we know from other idence. But there were other reasons r Freud's deliberately incomplete interetation, including his desire to protect s close friend Dr. Wilhelm Fliess from e justified charge of incompetence.

<sup>\*</sup> Freud did, in fact, have some analytical words to say about *The Brothers Karamazov*, a novel he immensely admired. See "Dostoevsky and Parricide" (1928).

<sup>\*</sup> If this is the first appraisal of Freud as a late romantic—in my judgment unwarranted—it was not to be the last; Lionel Trilling would express the same view half a century later.

<sup>\*\*</sup>If this review had entered the mainstream of early discourse about psychoanalysis, perhaps Freud would have been spared some of the accusations that the reviewer here disposes of so briefly.

important point, which bears on the nature of man's instinctual equipment, Dr. Freud is lamentably inconclusive. We may note in his defense that other scientists, psychologists and biologists alike, remain confused over man's instinctual drives. But it would have been useful if Dr. Freud had described the dimensions of the problem that he and all other students of the mind confront when they approach its essential building blocks.

N DR. FREUD'S theory, then, the dreamer dreams all his life of infantile wishes. Why then are dreams so hard to read? Why do they not simply and invariably show a little boy in bed with his mother, his father lying on the floor, dead? It is in'order to answer these reasonable questions that Dr. Freud has felt obliged to make his book so

long. Part of the answer we have already supplied: the condition of sleep is, by definition, one of redeed vitality. True, the "censorship" that protects waking humans from impermissible wishes, both sexual and hostile, is also in a state of somnolence: but it remains alert enough to force the wishes to take on disguises, to steal across the frontiers of consciousness in a variety of masks. (The sole exception Dr. Freud notes, is the dreams of small children, in which desires for forbidden foods and other gratifications are directly represented as fulfilled.)

This almost universal procedure of disguising wishes (he calls it "dream work") has a complex logic of its own, just as the language of dreams has its own grammar, and Dr. Freud devotes much time to both. In the course of his exposition, he shows how the dreamer picks up the materials for his dream from recent.

often quite neutral, experient ("day's residues"), and how los trains of thought have a pecula order imposed on them by what Freud describes as "condensatio" and "displacement." He adds a calogue of dream symbols standing such phenomena as sexual into course, and life and death. It is her of course, that The Interpretation Dreams most resembles the dre books of servant girls. Consideration of space prevent me from going if details here; suffice it to say, I Freud amply documents his dre symbols with dreams drawn from own life, those of his friends, all from literature. Dreams appear firly as the true guardians of sle employing tactics of great ingenuv as they forge a compromise between wishes and defenses against wish in order to keep the sleeper at re-

Far-reaching as these elucidation of dreams certainly are, what must call Dr. Freud's enorma scientific effrontery emerges m plainly in the concluding chapter. which he attempts, as we have note. to generalize beyond dreams to universal theory of the human mir. But that theory remains intertwind with, and dependent on, his n rower, though still very bold, int pretation of dreams. Whether gether they will stand or fall is question that must await the kill of empirical research that we, medical scientists, accept as our or road to conviction. As it stands, the monograph depends more heavily assertion and sheer wit than on prothough we must confess that we this it more likely that Dr. Freud w prove to be a genius than a chartan. If Dr. Freud should be provi right, this monograph will stand a scientific achievement of impresive dimensions. But since it has its origins in a highly technical fiel interest in which is severely limite, we think we can safely predict the The Interpretation of Dreams w find few readers.

In fact, in its first six years, To Interpretation of Dreams sold of 351 copies; a second edition was recalled for until 1909.

HARPER'S/SEPTEMBER 19



Solution to the August Puzzle

Notes for "Pressing Matters"

ENOLOGICALLY related, each of the unclued Across entries—types of wine—crossed with the variety of grape it is made from: ASTI SPUMANTE/MUSCAT, CHABLIS/CHARDONNAY, RHINE/RIESLING, BAROLO/NEBBIOLO and BEAUJOLAIS/GAMAY.

Across: 8. dac(reversal) Ron; 9. be(sicging Spar) ta; 10. elan, anagram; 11. Ja(cob) in; 12. tribut (ari) es, air (anagram); 14. ti-dal, reversal; 16. utmost, hidden; 21. dank(e); 23. fi(nag) le; 25. Aral, reversal; 26. alined. anagram; 28. go-Y-I'm; 29. selera; 30. tips-y; 31. tab-or-e(a) t. Down: 1. a(D) verted; 2. sac(k); 3. Irani(a.n.); 4. S.O.B.'s; 5. Uniat, hidden; 6. abnormal, anagram; 7. ear.N-S; 11. ju(n)g; 13. B-lo-B; 15. al(K-A) lies; 17. typecast(h), anagram; 19. Nairobi, anagram; 20. corncob, homonym ("kernels"); 22. all-out; 23. f-agot(reversal); 24. hell-0; 27. dear, homonym.

#### THE MIND'S EYE

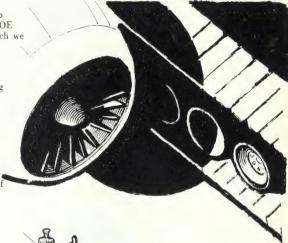
by David Suter

#### THE FORCE

I have called this press conference to announce the development, by DOD/DOE scientists, of a new energy source, which we have called *Rapid Deployment Force*.

Unlike solar, nuclear, and fossil fuels, RDF has the exciting prospect of being clean and efficient, freeing valuable resources for our society's expanding needs.

Our people feel that used prudently in arid desert regions, an RDF-burning vehicle like this one could save the taxpayers some hundreds of millions of dollars in energy payments every day, or about the total daily revenues of an OPEC member like Saudi Arabia.



Questions?



consider RDF a renewable resource?

Oh, indeed. One of the attractive features of RDF is that it is completely expendable.

## AH, NIHILISM!

The prince of jabberwocky

by Barbara Grizzuti Harrisa

OR THREE days this spring I witnessed a strange and feverish event. And I experienced that sense of disequilibrium that comes of seeing people being goaded and psychologically terrorized, and of not knowing to what exact purpose. To say that I was watching a funny little man from Calabria, Italy, attempting to take over, or remake, a culture-or that I was watching an experiment to determine how many people could be bamboozled in the space of seventytwo hours-is perhaps to sound overwrought. But I've thought a lot about it since then, and I remain unshaken in my conviction that what I saw was an elaborate scam, all the more appalling because its exact nature continues to elude me.

All I know is that it was bad.

"Are you going to interview him?" the man from The New York Times asked me.

"Of course. Aren't vou?"

"Evil. Do you think the Times will let me use the word 'evil' to describe what's going on here?"

"So are you going to interview him?"

Barbara Grizzuti Harrison is the author of Visions of Glory: A History and a Memory of Jehovah's Witnesses. Her most recent book is Off Center, a collection of essays, published by Dial Press. "I already have."

"And?"

"Gibberish. Do you think the Times will let me use the word 'evil'?"

"So what did you ask him?"



"Nothing he was willing to answe The odd thing is, I'm not sure I uderstood my own questions."

"Lina Wertmuller says she understands him: admires him, in fact.

"Madness. I wonder if I can up the word 'evil,' what do you think"

I interviewed him (a dream decourse), him being Armando Vereglione, thirty-six-year-old darling Milanese nihilists, bête noire of the European intellectuals who have nhis alchemical power to transfon opaque ideas into a thriving indutry, founder and leader of the Myimento Freudiano Internaziona, and arguably the worst thing the has happened to Italy since Musslini addressed his people from the little balcony across from the Victa Emmanuel monument.

I ask you to suspend disbelief al take my word for it that the folloing conversation took place on the evening of May 2, in the Baroque Room of the Plaza Hotel, on the third day of a Movimento happening billed as the "International Congres of Psychoanalysis: Sex and Laguage." at a time when I was in fill command of my senses. Extraornary circumstances call for extraodinary measures. In the ordinar course of events, I do not pose surquestions as:

"What would you give a starving Somalian: a piece of bread or a

atence?"

"Mankind is fed by language."
"Yes, but what would you give a

ing man?"

"I cannot talk in generalities. I not behave uniformly. I would ve to make a separate decision each man. I would have to ask reself certain questions first. Every t is a failed act... Altri questions

ni."
"I'm not at all sure I understood ur answer to my first question...
hunger something that concerns

u?"

"Your questions stem from an outrn mythology. There is no such ng as class. There is no such thing rich and poor. There is only lan-

age."

"I see." I did not, of course, see.
"... but language is not a tool of
mmunication," he goes on to say.
"So what are a thousand people
ing here at a congress called 'Sex
d Language'?"

"We are here to listen to one anper through misunderstanding. We derstand through misunderstandg. We are listening, hearing, but t understanding."

"Am I meant to understand that

at is a good thing?"

"You are meant to understand thing. I do not recognize such tegories as good or bad. Logic ists outside of good and evil."

"So perhaps you'll tell me where the money comes from to hold

is conference."

"That is a question that stems

m demonology."

"I understand from that that you cuse me of being a demonologist. ould you care to be more precise?"
"I do not believe in you. I believe nothing. God is an empty point. te empty point exists in language dy... Altri questioni."
"Is sex good?"

"Sex is neither good nor bad. Sex sex."

"And is the body an instrument love?"

"The body is not an instrument of sything . . . Altri questioni."

"If sex is 'just sex,' and if lantage is not a means of communicaon, why have we been listening to ople talk about sex in three languages for three days?"

"Dante danced in the sky with the Devil."

"I beg your pardon?"

"Altri questioni."

INA WERTMULLER says: "But he is so wonderful, he is poor man from Calabria, he must walk fifteen miles a day to school, and now, look! Look where he is!"

At the Plaza Hotel he is, surrounded by scores of acolytes, male and female, his every move followed by television cameras and journalists—the ringmaster of a circus that over one thousand New Yorkers paid \$40 to attend. He is a totally unprepossessing guru: squat, square, an oiled pompadour, a shiny mohair suit, three-toned ventilated shoes, unlit cigar in his mouth; a jokeperson.

"Look now where he is!" Lina Wertmuller cries.

"Where is that, exactly?"

"He has arrived at power," she says.

"My father came from Calabria, too . . ."

"And is he today at the Plaza?"
He is not.

"Miss Wertmuller," I say, "I never wanted to believe that the message contained in your films was that survival is the greatest human virtue. But you seem now to be admiring Verdiglione because he's made it from Calabria to Milan to New York and because he has achieved a certain amount of power. Do I misunderstand you? Do you admire what he says?" Do you understand what he says?"

"My films," Wertmuller hisses, "speak for themselves." She hurries off in pursuit of Verdiglione, while journalists from the Village Voice, the Daily News, Rolling Stone, the Times of London, and Paris-Match set off in pursuit of her, celebrity copy.

"Come on," my friend from the Times says, "I've cornered some Dutch psychoanalysts. Maybe they can tell us what this is all about."

"They're here from Holland, too?"
"They're here from everywhere."

HAT KIND of power does
Verdiglione have? He
is the head of a publishing house, the author of hundreds of articles and dozens of books (all on display at the
Plaza), the president of a glossy
monthly magazine called Spirale, and
the publisher of four bimonthly journals of psychiatry, clinical theory,
logic, and mathematics. If to be entrepreneurially busy is to be powerful, he is very powerful.

Ugo Stille, the distinguished American correspondent for Corriere della Sera, says: "Every morning, hundreds of Milanesi wake up and curse Verdiglione and wish that they were Verdiglione. Ah, lucre! And all those pretty young boys and girls." (All those pretty young boys and girls, according to sources who are reluctant to be quoted for attribution, are the kids of rich Milanesi with recognizable family names.)

Ah, hedonism! Ah, nihilism!

And Verdiglione is putting his show on the road. In January 1982 he will hold a conference in Rome; it will be called "Culture." In May 1982 the circus comes to Paris, to be called, this time, "The Mirror, The Look, The Voice." (If language is not a tool of communication, what does it matter what Verdiglione calls his conferences?) In the spring of 1983, Tokyo. In the fall of 1983, New York City again. (With any luck I'll be in Amalfi at the time.)

Gurus are in business to offer people something-salvation, success, riches, contentment, enlightenment. But Verdiglione offers his followers nothing but incomprehensible lectures out of which they can occasionally salvage a phrase, "the impossibility of living" being one such phrase, and his only hard offer. A hat full of rain. Like other gurus, Verdiglione claims that his philosophy (if it can be called that) serves neither the left nor the right; it is an essence uncorrupted by politics or by what you and I might call "current events," which trouble Mr. Verdiglione not at all.

Nothing troubles Mr. Verdiglione because "nothing matters."

If nothing matters, then every act is like every other act, everything is

possible and everything is permitted
—which, for some people, must
sweeten considerably "the impossibility of living."

Ah, hedonism! Ah, nihilism!

I wonder if Verdiglione and Werner Erhard have ever met.

HE NEWSPAPER advertisements that heralded Verdiglione's arrival were tantalizing (if unidiomatic), and the press invitations were irresistible. "Among other participants: Antonioni ... Burroughs ... Kundera ... Szasz ... Xenakis ... Robbe-Grillet ... Guccione ... Trilling ... Wertmuller ... Talese."

One began immediately to feel little prickles of suspicion, Kundera and Guccione? Neither, in the event, showed up. Nor did Richard Brautigan, John Simon, Allen Ginsberg, Wim Wenders, Jerzy Kosinski, and a host of other "guest stars" who were supposed to be there. (Most, it was widely conjectured, had simply received postcards inviting them to show up, which was enough for Verdiglione to run with.) Among the topics to be discussed: "Arthur, a Grammar. Gertrude, a Syntax"; "War-Fuck or Love Poetry"; "Who Is Fucking Who" (a question that was, in fact, to be asked frequently during the course of the conference. albeit grammatically); "Histo-Sexual Language Roots of Psychiatry in Spanish-Speaking Folks" (nice populist touch there); "My Cunt-tree 'Tis of Thee-Visual Prejudice, Be Careful It's my Art.'

On Thursday, May 1, a day before the congress was open to the public, a press conference was held at the Plaza. It was composed, in equal parts, of press camaraderie, nihilist chic, and jabberwocky. French, Italian, and American journalists drank Moët champagne, indulged their appetites for croissants and brioches, and meanwhile tried to decipher the material contained in the press kits, of which this is a sample:

"Sex permeates language and lan-

guage permeates sex."

"Sexuality and politics are neither translatable nor interchangeable."

"New York Congress is a deter-

minant moment in the Freudian Movement proposing the invention of a culture, starting from the indications which comes [sic] from the psychoanalysis; a non-ontological practice, being aware of time."

Verdiglione's people mingled among the crowd, repeating certain words: the void ... the conjugability of signifiers ... the un-number ... Cartesian assumption ... Husserlian assumption. And certain names: Roland Barthes, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Michel Foucault. Jacques Lacan.

Verdiglione stalked the room (never without a trail of pretty attendants). He smirked and shrugged off questions with a wave of his cigar: all would be made clear in the fullness of time.

"Is Verdiglione a structuralist?" I heard someone ask,

"He's not saving."

"Is Verdiglione a semiologist?"

"'Io sono Verdiglione' is all he'll

I am told by someone who knows about these things that the disciplines called semiotics and structuralism pose questions that intrigue European literati and philosophers: How can our experience in the world be organized to reveal hidden meanings? How is culture related to language? Many people, my friend thinks, will come to the congress hoping that the less understood Freud—the Freud who addressed himself to metaphor, image, and language—will be revealed.

I think this is a sublime exercise in wishful thinking. Perhaps some earnest graduate students will come in order to understand Freud more fully; but explications of structuralism and semiotics are not what will draw most people to this event. Big names are the draw, and the implicit promise of sexual titillation. And what I think of as a kind of decadent Soho mentality is also at work: any happening justifies itself by virtue of being a happening. (And You Are There!)

As we talk among ourselves, certain questions become more and more insistent: Why did Alitalia offer heavily discounted flights to participants in the conference? Why did the French government agree to fly over

some of France's intellectual heavinghts? Where did the money of the Plaza (reportedly over a quarr of a million dollars) come from that are Brazilians, Indonesia Australians doing here? Who put their expenses? Whose interests as being served?

At last Verdiglione condescends address us: "Psychoanalysis do not exist," he says. "There is sexuality without parricide," he say "God is a voice/void." He condem (without defining) the "romanticis

of the left."

Philippe Sollers, a French novist (dressed all in black), says: I shall not apologize for speaking French. I shall not apologize french. It just happens that I speak French.... There is no laguage," he says, "capable of being translated into another language were receive this message translated through portable earphones.

A trilingual translator steps of her glass booth: "Nothing got le in the translation," she says, to one in particular. "This is psychot babel in any language." "Did I atually hear Sollers say incest we equal to mother and poetry?" I as "I'm afraid so." she replies.

Alain Robbe-Grillet, looking lac rymose, says, "My sex is vague at my language is absent." He spea in French for twenty minutes. "Wring a novel is a sexual crime," ]

No questions are invited; no quetions are asked.

Later, comparing notes with oth journalists (why didn't we bomba them with questions?), I found that almost without exception, they'd fe bludgeoned: their bodies hurt, as d mine. This is a phenomenon I'd of served before, during est training for instance, and after interview with Moonies and Hare Krishna When one's psyche is assaulted, who the intrusion is great, the body r sponds. (I was not the only person to suffer from insomnia that fire night.) Even before all the eviden was in, the body of the man from the Times told him he was experencing evil.

A New York psychoanalyst said "This is not a cultural gathering

but a quasi-religious event in rdiglione's honor. He wants to be reat intellectual on a world scale. e man is some sort of maniac. ssibly psychopathic." I wondered ne was overreacting. (I wondered was overreacting.) "Let me ask this," he said. "Does your body 1?

Verdiglione formed his first cadre Milan. (There are some peopleount myself among them-who do consider Milan to be part of ly.) Milanese architects, you may rember, were responsible, a decago, for designing "mini-enviments"-molded plastic units that ild fit into a space the size of an renerous closet. The environments e touted as the solution to overpulation, the salvation of the wded poor. But the poor never toned to them. They became inad the playthings of the rich. (I use myself by thinking of a dayorange mini-environment parked the middle of a grand salon of a lanese palazzo.)

do not trust imports from Milan.

CROUP," Freud said, "is subject to the truly magical power of words." For three days participants and obvers were held hostage to words. they darted from conference room conference room, hoping, I supse, to find an insight, or a comhensible sentence.

had breakfast at the Plaza with riend who has studied structuraland semiotics, "You're overought," she said, "I'm sure all y're trying to do is break down iventional categories. They're stirg passive people up, shocking m into forging new connections. Who the hell are all these peolistening in to our conversation?" rdiglione's people were all around in the Palm Court. "They're bad,"

friend said. Robbe-Grillet passed table. He rested a hand on my oulder. "Bonjour," he said. It was I could do to keep from saving. istesse." His latest film-undisouted in France-was being shown the NYU Dental School audito—You can look the sparrow — straight in the eye from 250 feet and you can see it blink.

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—Christopher Lehmann-Haupt, The New York Times

"Huck Finn would have welcomed Agee as a soulmate on the raft."

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-Alan Cheuse, Saturday Review

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In the Savoy Room, Wertmuller informed a dense crowd that in the good old days one always had "a childhood accomplice, a friend, against one's mother." Now children have "only an ugly luminescent box -television-a paid accomplice, to act against their mothers, against the family, against authority." Inconceivable that a child might actually like his mother. Inconceivable, in the world according to Wertmuller, that the family is not necessarily a microcosm of Hitlerian or Stalinist authoritarianism, "Fascinating," Wertmuller said, commenting on her own words. "I don't know what I'm saving, I'm blind. I hope you don't understand a thing." Not to worry.

In the Baroque Room Thomas Szasz, a born performer, enjoyed himself enormously, and actually spoke in recognizable English sentences. About masturbation. His anecdotes were charming, insofar as anecdotes about masturbation can be said to be charming. He was followed by William Burroughs, who rambled on incoherently about Levittown houses, germ warfare, cancer research, and rabies. The hope of the human race, he said, was in "space exploration and genetic manipulation."

A woman who represented herself as a German feminist said: "I want to insert this in the mind of the audience. There is no penetration in the sexual act, there is only engulfment. Has that penetrated your minds?"

ND so it went. Silly, you might say. I say evil. After all, it is possible for a thing to be dangerous as well as funny, sinister as well as silly. I say evil because people were being toyed with. When Verdiglione says, for example, that philosophers support "the religion which believes in the universe and in its moral order. one doesn't know whether he is defending a moral order or implying that no moral order exists. Like much of the conference's rhetoric, this is designed to breed confusion; it makes people crazy. What is one to make of a statement like this:

"Where there is truth, there is oppression, I believe in truth."

"The body," mathematician Jean Toussaint Desanti declared at one point in the conference, "is that which appears and disappears. The body has the unity of zero." Indeed, throughout the three days one felt as if one were being harangued by zero-worshipers. "To verify that wine has body," Desanti said, "one must taste and swallow it. It must disappear. What remains is the body of the wine. The wine remains to be consumed; it exists for disappearing." It sounded like a parody of a Black Mass.

"For all the talk about sex." Peter Blom, a Dutch psychiatrist, said to me, "did you ever get the feeling that anyone was talking about sex as human beings actually experience sex? Did you hear anyone say sex was fun, healthy, loving, good, warm?" I didn't. (Of course, I could have been in the wrong room at the wrong time.) My perception that the congress was a celebration of hedonism and nihilism was challenged by an analyst who said that Verdiglione's cadre of young women (and men) were "desexualized, nonerotic, The women don't know how to flirt. They are pleasant only insofar as you serve their master, Glacial, Remind me of witches. It would be better if they were hedonistic. They are nihilist-fundamentalists, which is a whole lot worse."

Metaphysics aside, one had to wonder what the politics of the Movement were, despite its claims to neutrality. (Where there is money, there are politics, explicit or not.) Stanley Leavy, a professor of psychiatry at Yale, said this: "Overtly, their politics seem radical. Functionally, they lead you away from real social reform. They are apolitical, regressive. Verdiglione's cult freed people from loony bins in Milan—but not from slums."

An Italian is droning on and on: voice ... point ... void ... ineffable ... semblant ... religion of death. Suddenly, an apparition: five women appear as if from nowhere. (For several moments, I don't believe my eyes.) Dressed in black sackcloth with pillows stuffed up their dresses

to give the impression of pregnan, barefoot, chained together, they carry a twenty-three-foot-long shocki, pink banner: FORCED PREGNANCY-SLAVERY / DEFEND ABORTION NO. They station themselves in front the speakers' platform

The speaker drones on, Nobody shocked. Nobody reacts. "Do sorthing! Applaud!" Alix Kates St. man, one of the standard-bearers plores, Nobody reacts. Their stud theatricality is no match for helter-skelter lunacy of the last the days. In any case we are nuri Even the casting of their guerri theater (pathetically reminiscent the late Sixties) seems wrong: to of the women appear to be w beyond childbearing age. (They mind me of something I once s in an antiwar protest: a white ma carrying a sign that said. NO VII NAMESE EVER CALLED ME A NIGGER

Sexual politics make strange be fellows. I am bound to conclude the this group and the Verdiglione peple have more in common the either would care to admit: be deny (though in very different way biology, the body; both use words weapons. Dispiriting.

ATURDAY, the final day of to conference. The crowd is thinned out. It appears to evenly divided between the who want (metaphorically) to brek Verdiglione's kneecaps and the who want nothing more than to serender themselves in an orginastic oppression of delight.

Taylor Meade, America's waterdown version of Quentin Crisp, ta coyly about "dog poo." Then reads brutally graphic poetry about homosexual copulation. "I he blown and been blown," he reads a stentorian voice, a line that drast thunderous applause. As does a viviaccount of a homosexual rape, as a poem about an imaginary—maybe not imaginary—encoun with Montgomery Clift in Centil Park, unspeakable carryings-on in gazebo.

This is not a predominantly lmosexual crowd. It is an audier applauding its own liberality and co-

tulating itself on its unshockabil-In its determination to be fashable and to appear hip, in its fear appearing ignorant or retrograde insensitive to what passes for cule, it resembles nearly every other lience of the last three days: it ponds with high seriousness to at ought to evoke wild laughter. so it is that the latter-day hippies, unct professors, suburban maas, young women from the "sex ustry," elegantly dressed Parias, epicenes with green nail polish I gold Rolex watches, and urban vboys all applaud the big event the day, a dance (loosely speakby "performance artist" Trisha own. In this context, intelligent ple don't trust their own renses. A reporter, halfway through wn's performance, says: "This is p. isn't it? Isn't this what Jules ffer has been caricaturing for nty years?" But she is told, h great good will, by a man who oving it all, that she is witnessing eminist dance event. "I am?" she s. "I thought it was crap." And scribbles feminist dance event her notebook, "What do I know?"

she knew what she saw: Trisha wn stood in the middle of the Iroom and rotated her fists, mbs extended, seven or eight ies. Then she performed three nersaults. Then she made a silent cuit of the ballroom. Then she formed three somersaults and d, "My father died." Then she ated her fists, thumbs extended, I said: "I am putting my clothes the washing machine." This exise was billed as "Water Accumuon Plus Motor Power and Furrmore." ("It really raised my isciousness," one young woman

I prayed for the Lord to deliver . I got Philippe Sollers instead. llers: "I am asked: Is this show siness? A circus? I am asked: w is it possible to formulate in a tel any theoretical consideration sex and language? I am asked: mere does the money come from? I questions from money fetishists! are Martians. We are paid by a ret organization. This congress

will mark an important stage in the destruction of analysis. I am too tired to speak of the Plague."

At last Verdiglione invited questions:

"Where does the money come from?" No answer.

"Why were speakers announced who did not come? Why were people who declined to come nevertheless listed?" "Altri questioni." (Applause, for Verdiglione.)

"What issues are being debated?" (Hisses.)

A young woman took the floor microphone: "I am a dance therapist, and I am having separation anxiety," she said.

"If you want to perplex people, aren't there cheaper ways?" No answer.

"Why, from the moment this conference began, has the conference itself, and not the substance of the speeches, been the issue? Why has language been paid more attention to than what was being said?" "Altri questioni."

"Are you telling us that there is no truth, no relative truth?" No answer.

"How can we keep the Plague from New York?"

"Why won't you tell us where the money comes from?"

At last Verdiglione (speaking so loudly into a microphone that almost adhered to his lips that his translator could salvage only isolated phrases from the wreckage of his ranting) began his peroration:

"The bottom of the night is zero... Between the path of night and the path of day, there is dusk.... Once upon a time there was a sophist.... I came down out of the sky...."

(At this point I yelled aloud, "So is the money pennies from heaven?" and endeared myself to very few by giggling uncontrollably—funeral-parlor laughter.)

"Thieves!" Verdiglione shouted.
"Dante existed in solitude.... There exists a contingent of walkers in the sky!... Armando Verdiglione now goes to Milan.... Walk in the sky!"

It was over.

And people cheered.

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## PUZZLE

#### SIXES AND SEVENS

by E. R. Galli and Richard Malthy, Jr.

(With acknowledgments to Zander of The Listener)

#### This month's instructions:

The clues to words of six and seven letters are grouped separately. Solvers must determine where each answer belongs in the diagram, using the answers to the numbered clues as guides. There is one proper noun among the answers. As always, mental repunctuation of a clue is the key to its solution

The answer to last month's puzzle appears on page 86.

#### CLUES

#### ACROSS

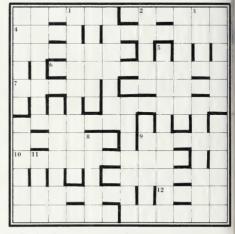
- 4. Creep ran outside, flinched (4)
- 6. Traveling's wrong for him-he's all skin and bones (10)
- 7. Senior worker with metal (but not lead) (5)
- 9. Writer of cryptic notes! (5)
- 10. Alas, in Germany getting romantic without using name is colorless (10)
- 12. Removed love for gambling game (4)

#### DOWN

- 1. Breed with a terribly old man (10)
- 2. Show the way to top off a new oil well (5)
- In conflict, anguish doesn't end (4)
- 5. They go to court without trimming arguments (10)
- 8. Put one in additional fancy fabric (5)
- 11. Canadian Indian is 80% American Indian (4)

#### SIX-LETTER WORDS

- a. A wife put gossip first-that's a laugh
- b. I like getting into bed with a special interest
- c. Line of condor in flight
- d. Name for the last character found at the end of a snow-
- e. Bishop hastened church's division



- f. Flunkies have seen my meandering
- g. Walked back about mile to abscond
- h. Suits a prosecutor rests on small points
- i. Moment . . . that is to say, rest
- i. Black soldier returns. White soldier returns. It's notable
- k. Statue sculpted with craft
- l. Musical transitions essential to houseguests

#### SEVEN-LETTER WORDS

- a. With a twang, like everyone in New York
- b. Part of the television articles about a state
- c. Acted in cards as if you had a big bank?
- d. Hors d'oeuvre found in Burgher King
- e. He's forcibly kept in army to mature f. Hormone Linus developed at home
- g. English court beheaded Scotch girls embracing follower
- h. Open the second note after . . . after some time in the past
- i. Most black socks, i. e., knits
- i. Mother turned in powdered sugar, initially-these shortages are severe
- k. Often, drilling gives support for a plant
- i. Hankering to put time in a Chinese mystical book

#### CONTEST RULES

Send completed diagram with name and address to Sixes and Sevens, Harper's Magazine, Two Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Entries must be received by September 9. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened will receive a one-year subscription to Harper's. The solution will be printed in the October issue. Winners' names will be printed in the November issue. Winners of the July puzzle, "Biased Opinion," are Peggy Kelvie, Golden, Colorado; John N. Koch, Madison, Wisconsin; and David Russell Williams, Memphis, Tennessee.

October 1981 HE ART OF MOVING PICTURES BY BRUNO BETTELHEIM

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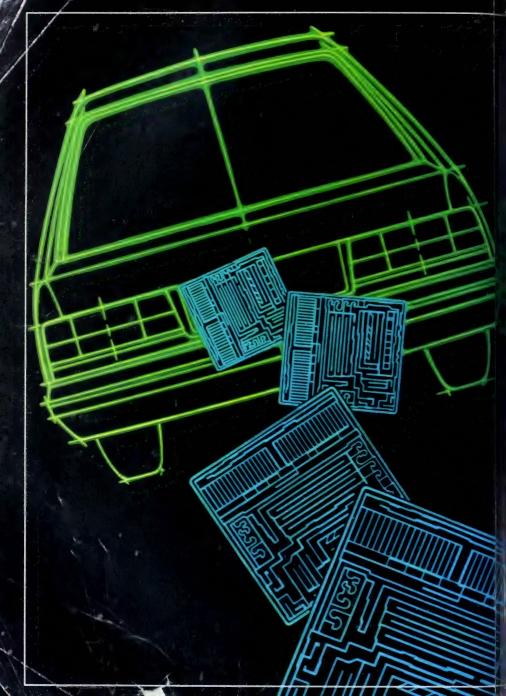
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The study identifies a cohesive and powerful group, about 45 million strong, as 'intensely religious,' together with another large group of people who are 'latently' religious. 'Our findings suggest that the increasing impact of religion on our social and political institutions may be only the beginning of a trend that could change the face of America,' Connecticut

Mutual notes.

The findings throw light on the political clout of such organizations as the Moral Majority. They suggest, too, that the highly religious may well be the most vocal force of the '80s, just as the disaffected

were the most vocal in the '60s and '70s.

The growing influence of religious belief mirrors something deeper than the alienation and turmoil of the '60s and '70s. It is rooted in the uncertainties and dilemmas of getting by "in a society saturated with choices," the study points out. People are clinging to religion because it provides "some measure of order in their lives, some restraint on the cultural injunction to pursue happiness...to its farther limits."

The survey documented a widening gulf between Americans and their leaders. Not only does the public lack confidence in its leaders, but fully half the leaders questioned believe the people cannot be counted on to select the caliber of leadership the

nation needs.

A curious finding: The public pinpoints honesty far and away as the quality it wants most in its leaders—yet honesty wasn't even among the top three qualities cited by leaders themselves in response to what they felt the people look for in a leader. Apart from religious figures, business leaders were found to be most in accord with public values among leadership in the fields covered: law and justice, education, government, business, military, news media, religion, science, and voluntary associations.

Of all contemporary issues, moral questions reflect the sharpest division between Americans and their leaders. Across the entire range of moral issues, leaders are consistently more liberal and permissive in their judgements. This suggests America's leaders are out of touch with "the current of faith which appears to be gathering strength" throughout the land.

Sort of reminds us of the fellow trailing a band of citizens on the run, panting: "Lo, there go the people. I must catch up

to them. For I am their leader."



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# LETTERS

## Literary sharpshooting

It is too bad that Bryan Griffin ["Panic Among the Philistines," Harper's, August], in attacking the hyperbole and excess of the literati, falls into his own trap. If Mr. Griffin's gift for short fiction is as great as his gift for satire, one can't help but suspect that he is motivated primarily by sour grapes.

Griffin either picks easy targets (Mailer, Capote, Oates) or presents unfair pictures of critics with far more integrity than he can ever hope to possess. As an avid reader of the critics he attacks, I hardly get the impression that they are apologists

for mediocrity.

Blinded by his petulance, Griffin fails to distinguish between reviews and criticism. Any intelligent reader of book reviews knows that the opinionated rhetoric Griffin mocks is part of the genre. The reader weighs the reviewer's remarks with this in mind.

Griffin's remarks seem motivated by envy more than anything else. The puerility of his style as well as the selectiveness of his quotation belie any real force his argument

may have.

I recommend to him as a model the reviews of the late Randall Jarrell, whose wit is infinitely sharper because he does not resort to unfairly documented personal attack. Unlike Griffin, Jarrell could criticize the Philistines without joining their ranks.

RICHARD M. FLYNN Arlington, Va.

Sure did enjoy that piece of writing by Mr. Bryan F. Griffin. Out here in cow country we need all the fun we can get. Now, we didn't quite get what Ol' Mr. Griffin was gettin' at, but we all sorta figured he was saying that he was tired of one kinda

folks (critics) all droolin' over a other kinda folks (writers) will didn't deserve all that droolin' in first place and that no one was real payin' attention to the writers will truly deserved to be drooled ove (Mr. Griffin gave us a list, which will gave to the Bookmobile, of all the ignored writers so we'll get the books here real soon.)

Anyhow, just 'cause we didr really get all of what Mr. G. sa' doesn't mean we didn't enjoy thell out of it. We could read it alou and listen to all them words say the same thing over and over in so mar ways that it began to sound remelodious. You know what I mear Sounded just like the noise our bul make when we're walkin' them frough all that, ah, dung just get to where they're goin'. You know sort of a wet, sloppy sound. Rehomey.

Now, you just take care out ther in New York and keep that sul scription coming.

> MARK HAL Genoa, Ne

It was with the greatest satisfation that I read Bryan F. Griffin incisive "Panic Among the Philitines," Part 1. I assure you the atticle alone is worth a year's sul scription price to *Harper's*.

Amiel, the Swiss philosophe wrote that "all ages are alike; oul the genius is above the age," be our age is singular in that it has bre no geniuses in the literary tradition. Our geniuses are the scientists where the mind and the spirit, the pragmatic and the transcenden Eschewing a metaphysics that one informed science and all creative endeavors, dispensing with moral conditions on the grounds that the nature of their labors transcends suc

erely human notions, they have iid their seal upon the age. Artists, terary and otherwise, taking a clue om the powerful fraternity of osmisible "seekers to know," and ulled by this nonsense, also sought raze the moral "impediments" of e past and substitute instead the recepts of freedom set by their ientific brothers as a standard for eative and imaginative activity, he results in literature are evident labored, turgid prose with emanated plots and minuscule ideas.

The same holds true for the plastic rts, where artists attempted to celerate the destruction of content. rtega y Gasset, the brilliant Spanh philosopher, in The Dehumanation of Art absurdly glorified the rocess in the least credible of all is writings. In this connection it amusing to point out that while ie French avant-garde made capital ut of the act of destroying the sohisticated cultural traditions of the est, it took up another long-held adition, that of primitive art, thus 1 effect merely displacing traditions. Man seeks constantly to refashion

ne elements of his age, but that flort must be leavened by the disled essence of tradition, a critical car for the necessary continuity that a condition of existence in which he past is constantly being reconituted into new forms. Attempts to eate full-blown ideas uncultivated y that seminal infusion lead to erility.

Thus mediocrity has replaced simlicity; sexual explicitness, sensuous aggestibility; and the commonplace, ignity. We are now overwhelmed y an ordinariness that has been levated to an ideal. A dreary formula has replaced spontaneity, loveness, and intelligence.

Critics such as Griffin do an enormous service at the risk of unpopurity and scorn.

SYLVIA DAY Woodstock, N.Y.

Bryan F. Griffin's essay is a classic xample of what happens when a ritic starts a piece with a dubious onclusion, and then runs amuck for he rest of the work trying to prove :. Acting as the great debunker of

American letters, Griffin must figure if his body count is high enough he's performing some kind of necessary critical service. In point of fact, though, the title of his polemic is totally false; I see no evidence among writers or critics of overwhelming fear or a hostility to culture.

Much of today's criticism is undeniably bad, but I don't see how that can be blamed on Philistinism. Rather, I think it can be traced to a timidity resulting from an excessive devotion to culture. This can be best exemplified in a poorly edited journal like the New York Review of Books. If this bastion of pseudointellectualism, featuring cult members writing wan notes to each other, is the best that America has to offer, what can we expect but sterility in our reviewing? At a time when we need more iconoclasm in our literary criticism, Griffin favors returning to a Henry James-like conservatism, with bland, uncontroversial reviews.

The thought of writers cringing in fear at how their reputations might be affected is equally absurd. The authors mentioned by Griffin are far too self-absorbed to pay attention to critics. Besides, with the exception of John Cheever, whose reputation seems secure for his classic short stories, all the other writers appear to have trashed their literary reputations by themselves. So today we find Capote imitating his bête noire Jacqueline Susann, Irving writing inhuman black comedies for George Romero fans, Mailer wallowing through garbage cans, so shameless in his bellowing that he now tries to pass off edited letters as fiction, Roth playing the Jewish selfhatred fame game, Styron in Sophie's Choice introducing extraneous material about a poor southern goy and New York's littérateurs, and Vidal becoming a kitsch master who sees history as a porno soap opera and treats contemporary America with the wit of an aging drag queen who looks under every bed for a Trilateralist.

The problem that afflicts these writers is celebrity fiction, a new genre in which an author's work becomes a footnote to his life. By wasting time on writers' ego trips and trying to blame critics for their failures, Griffin seems to be encouraging more of the same from future writers. If Griffin had surveyed the work of authors such as Adams, Alther, Bellow, Burgess, Didion, Dunne, Gordon, Helprin, Kingston, Malamud, Paley, Pritchett, Updike, Wharton, and Yates, an entirely different picture would have emerged. But that wouldn't have been so sensational and certainly wouldn't have made the Philistine straw men appear to be a much better subject for today's critics than art.

DAN O'NEILL Los Angeles, Calif.

Bravo to Mr. Griffin for having the courage to express his opinion of the contemporary writing scene with such tenacious and prolonged enthusiasm. Is it too much to expect that in the second part of the article Mr. Griffin will tell us poor simpletons out here exactly what he's talking about?

REG POTTERTON New York, N.Y.

I'm glad that Bryan Griffin wrote his article "Panic Among the Philistines" and pointed out how lost in space we've become with regard to judging literature. Amid the competitive rush to spot new trends and to herald the latest geniuses, many of us—critics, writers, readers—have completely lost perspective. If the so-called New Conservatism gives us a sane point of view again, if it lets us judge literature in terms of the author's convictions and the depth of his characters, then we should all be thankful.

Critics' attempts to proclaim a New Fiction have done nothing but lead us off on silly tangents. That wetting-of-the-pants enthusiasm one finds on the back covers of John Updike's books, for instance, is embarrassing. Such blurbs came from the Sixties, mostly, in the aftermath of Nabokov's success. It was a time when critics sensed an opportunity to turn literature into a contest in which authors would spend a year or so constructing elaborate Christmas tree ornaments and then present their work to them—the critics—

for approval. Let's hope we are be-

I don't know if Moral Fiction is the best description for what we will probably, out of necessity return to in American literature. Perhaps "humanistic" is a better term But I think it will be a literature that, moral or not, will depend on the humanity of its characters rather than on the ornateness of its style. Those few great works of literature since the late Forties-Death of a Salesman. The Catcher in the Rye. A Streetcar Named Desire, Seize the Day, A Separate Peace-had nothing to do with literary trends or critics' expectations. They were, as Kurt Vonnegut says, accidents,

The five authors of those works have chosen, wisely I think, to retreat from intense public scrutiny. The ones who have come forward have been the desperate clowns:

Mailer, with his never-ending wail for attention; Capote, with his public demonstrations of bizarre nervous disorders; and Vidal, who admits he has no friends anymore, except the "American public."

Mr. Griffin is right. Such displays can be humorous, and they can be sad, but they have nothing really to do with literature. I say we stop this

do with literature. I say we stop this nonsense soon, before someone makes a serious mistake and nominates John Irving for the Nobel Prize.

IIM LILLIEFORS

JIM LILLIEFORS Bethesda, Md.

BRYAN F. GRIFFIN REPLIES:

There is a common thread running through many of the more indignant letters: everybody is still trying to please. The indignant are still trying to position themselves on a winning team, still trying to guess who's in and who's out, who's an "easy target" and who's too hot to handle, who's a dirty liberal and who's a dirty conservative, who's ambitious and who's down and out, which reputations are old hat and what's the latest trend. Almost nobody is trying to decide who's good and who's bad, or what's right and what's wrong. Least of all are our trendspotters trying to understand the connection between the values that characterize a society's entertainment and those forces—artistic and otherwise—that contribute to the individual and the social good. I am, in a word, disappointed. I had expected

As for my actual purposes, I can only say again what I have said many times, in many different contexts: I want us to think and feel for ourselves again. I want educated citizens to start reading what they like, instead of what they are told they must like. I want them to feel free to express the highest human sentiments-through music, literature, art, and public discourse-instead of feeling ashamed of themselves for harboring those sentiments, I want, in other words, to see moral aesthetic. spiritual, and intellectual splendor enthroned as the criteria by which we identify true art: and I want to see the increase of the sum of human happiness, goodness, and compassion reestablished as the objective of popular entertainment. I would like to see the men and women of genuine culture reassert themselves as a social force to be reckoned with, and I would like to live long enough to see them retake the high ground that they gradually surrendered over a period of a hundred vears. More than anything else, I wish to impress on those men and women the fact that there is not much time left. A civilization that cannot identify and honor its purposes through its art and its philosophy is a civilization that has forgotten why it exists; and a civilization that has mislaid its own justification can never hope to summon the moral energy to grapple-scientifically, intellectually, or spiritually-with the multitudinous nights that are so rapidly descending.

## Goodbye Good Neighbor

Carlos Fuentes's attack on the Monroe Doctrine ["Farewell, Monroe Doctrine," Harper's, August] is welcomed. No self-respecting Latin American could desire to see his country overrun by the Colossus of the North. But the welcome ends there.

References to self-government in

Cuba under Castro and democrate and pluralism in Sandinist Nicaraga are pointless because they are ill sions. As I recall, the last free eletion in Cuba was in pre-Castro day I also recall that in the early days the Sandinist government the ruling junta included nonleftists, who has by now been forced out of the gr ernment. It seems that Mr. Fuentes concept of democracy and plura ism is flawed and excludes nonle ist elements. The theory that Cast was pushed into the Soviet camp I American sanctions is a convenie but fallacious argument that in way accounts for the misery th Castro has unleashed on his peopl

The East-West confrontation in Salvador was begun not by the Ameicans but by Castro, the Sandinist the Vietnamese, the Bulgarians, the East Germans, and others who didded to interfere in El Salvadon

internal conflict.

I agree that, traditionally, U., policy toward Latin America h been arrogant and myopic, but it erroneous to blame the U.S. for the disarray in Latin American econorics and politics. Certainly, the wato mend that disarray is not throug Castroite or Sandinist revolution for these transform poor societi into even poorer societies by, amony other things, sending thousands upon thousands of soldiers to fight in distant wars.

Intellectual honesty demands the extremists of both the right and tleft be condemned. I must disagrate with people like Mr. Fuentes who call rightists dictators while wing a tolerant eye at the dictators the left under the guise of self-dtermination, pluralism, or some ot er empty label.

DANIEL RODRIGUE San Antonio, Te

Carlos Fuentes probably does be ter as a novelist and writer of stori than as a historian (or pamphletee)—except, perhaps, among Marxireaders.

The accuracy of his statemen might be more acceptable if he rei the Monroe Doctrine before e pounding its meaning. Mr. Fuentes allegation that the Monroe Doctri could not ban "extracontinental inerventions by the United States in ther hemispheres ... " is at varince with an important part of the policy: "In the wars of the European owers in matters relating to themelves we have never taken any part, or does it comport with our policy o to do."

Despite questions about applicabily and merit of the Doctrine through ae years, what President Monroe tated in his address to Congress on December 2, 1823, is a matter of

ecord.

Mr. Fuentes's prose in support of is somewhat rabid anti-U.S. attiide might be more effective among american readers if he departed rom the Soviet lexicon. For examle, he calls farmers and workers in I Salvador "peasants and proletar-

Inasmuch as this prestigious writr is identified with Mexico, it will e interesting and probably ironic note the extent to which his counry will use its resources to assume "proconsular attitude" vis-à-vis entral America and the Caribbean. RICHARD G. AUGENBLICK Arlington, Va.

Thank you for publishing Carlos uentes's excellent article on El Salador and Guatemala. Americans in eneral know little about Latin Amercan history and even less about U.S. itervention and meddling.

As Mr. Fuentes observes, we inervened in Guatemala in 1954 osensibly to rid the region of commuism. Now, thirty years later, the uatemalan government is facing an ven greater rebellion trying to fight ff the repressors we deemed supeior to the "communist" influence re told the world we were combatng. If this policy did not work in 954, what makes Mr. Reagan think t's going to work now? Mr. Fuentes correct when he observes, "... if Juatemalan democracy had been alowed to persist it would have inuenced democracy in El Salvador, londuras, and Nicaragua . . . ," and ve would face little communist chalenge there now. Communism flourshes where repression is rife. Thereore if we really want to face the

challenge of communism and not merely show the world how "macho" we are, we should, as Mr. Fuentes suggests, not aid the army which is the repressor, but let the country work out its own destiny. We give the communists an open door when we close off contact with the people who want to democratize their repressive governments.

> EILEEN J. DRISCOLL Libby, Mont.

### Wolfe at the door

Mention by Tom Wolfe instantly accords status, and the look you see on your favorite architect's face this week might indicate whether he's just been snubbed or patted. Among postmodernists receiving bogey prizes, there's been a lot of closed-compound speculation this week as to who tipped Wolfe off ["From Bauhaus to Our House," Harper's, June and July]. "We may have just experienced a very serious leak," one of those whom Wolfe discussed told me in New York last week. "He's gone beyond our façade." But outside the compounds there's genuine relief. Among the reasons that architects have never gotten out of the box is that critics could never get inside it. Now that the critic-proof roof they laid on top has been cracked, that may change.

This is not the first time that Tom Wolfe has written brilliantly about architecture but-given the trouble he's started-some hope it's the last. In any event it's the first time that I've seen so much public attention and good wit focused on a profession that until now has been mainly examined by architects looking only at themselves. It's good to be reminded by a nonarchitect that architecture can still be read and to see someone as agile as Wolfe recognize that personality, politics, and drama are as much a part of what we look at today as concrete and glass.

> ROGER L. CONOVER Architecture Editor MIT Press Cambridge, Mass. HARPER'S/OCTOBER 1981

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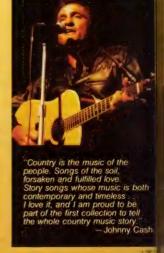
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# VAN GOGH'S EAR

Further notes on the official culture

by Lewis H. Laphm

П

The distinction between the patron and the quartermaster.

F THE words "patron of the arts" carry an aristocratic connotation (implying that the patron in question possesses more than a passing acquaintance with the arts to which he contributes his money. his presence, or his voice), then the United States could not escape the embarrassment of making invidious distinctions in a society supposedly egalitarian. The patron might harbor something so subversive as an independent taste, and this would play havoc with the rules for distributing the annual incentives and rewards. Fortunately for the republic, if not for the arts, the United States construes its obligation in this sphere as a moral or political activity, not as an existential necessity.

The disbursement of cultural subsidies thus falls to the same lawyers, politicians, and corporate managers who direct the country's more urgent affairs, for the most part people who take pride in the depth of their feeling rather than the acuity of their judgment. It is easy enough to imagine George Bush handing Claes Oldenburg a check for \$50,000 and congratulating him, with a boyish grin, for his perfectly wonderful paintings of soup cans.

As has been noticed by innumerable poets in residence at the nation's more expensive universities, the rulers of a middle-class democracy bear a conspicuously small resemblance to the princes of the Italian Renaissance. If they haven't got the wit to commission portraits from Piero della Francesca, neither do Lewis H. Lapham is the editor of Harper's

they have a talent for poisoning their sisters. Frederick the Great was enough of a musician to compose concerti for the flute and set old Bach a theme for a Ricercare in three parts. Louis XIV was an accomplished dancer as well as a close student of Molière's theater. In the absence of television and the Sunday New York Times, both kings had the leisure and inclination to practice an art. So also did the Elizabethan grandees who employed Shakespeare and Donne and could themselves write sonnets, or the wives and daughters at the Habsburg court who could play the music of Haydn and Mozart

Until the early years of the twentieth century the excitements of high art had not yet passed into the safekeeping of pedants and museums. The vast collection of things (paintings, metaphysical conceits, poems, porcelains, and musical compositions) that we name "the Western cultural tradition" still belonged within the sphere of active daily life, Art was part of the furniture, and otherwise unexceptional people could read Voltaire and Goethe without benefit of footnotes. Their number might have been relatively small, but by and large they were the same people who carried on the business of state.

HE TIMES changed, and so did the educational requirements. In the United States, citizens of mark now offer their ignorance of culture as proof of their devotion to the more serious matters of money and politics.

Gazing wistfully out to sea, past the Impressionist view of horses purchased in exchange for a lifelong preoccupation with corporate intride and maneuver, the magnate permisself the indulgence of a min regret. "Ah, my friend," he sea "If only I'd had the time to red Proust..." The remark drifts are beneath the roar of the helicopa settling on the lawn behind the tonis court, and the magnate hurral away to a meeting of unutteral significance.

The more sophisticated donors museums disguise their philistinia in the rags of humility. They simple men, they say, who know the something is good when it inspi in them a warmth of feeling. To substitution of sentiment for jud ment or reason allows them a co plex pleasure that combines a feeli of awe (for the mysterious objearrayed under the rubrics of high and big money) and a gratifyi condescension toward the poor wret of an artist who has wasted his l in the making of toys, an attitu comparable to that of the seni generals at the Pentagon who r tronize the intellectuals who ha supplied them with the miracle atomic weapons.

The manufacture of art in the United States comes under the hea ing of a frivolous or domestic pu suit—an occupation similar to wea ing baskets or making jam. An a ist belongs to the same category incompetence as women, childre and homosexuals; one might eve say that Americans conceive of a as something made by children ar sold to women through the mediu of homosexuals. The arrival of a artist dressed in a business suit, h hair neatly trimmed and his co versation sparkling with reference to the bond market, invariab arouses suspicion among his patron

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They prefer to see their clients in more romantic costumes, and it comforts them to think of artists as demented figures—people who cut off their ears, scream at radical meetings, and walk their pet lobsters at the end of a leash.

Knowing that the "people who count" must "do something for the arts," in much the same way that they must send their children to school and appease their wives with a charge account at Bergdorf's, the democratic patrons apply to the cultural authorities for the best advice that money can buy. Left to their own devices, they might commission works from artists whom they read or genuinely admire (Irving Stone, for example, or Victor Borge), but these artists so rarely hold the proper credentials that the mere mention of their names may prompt ridicule.

Molière's comedy Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme follows from his hero's dependence on the suite of dancing. fencing, and speech masters who invest him with the appearances of a nobleman. The same relation between anxious master and supercilious servant produces equally comic effects among the democratic patrons of the arts who depend on a suite of critics, scholars, curators, archivists, custodians, impresarios, and promoters to provide them with the furnishings of culture. Pity the poor patron, squinting at the tiny circles on the wall, suspicious of the jargon with which his most recent acquisition demands \$100,000 for wrapping the Grand Canyon in a blanket. He nods and squirms and bleakly smiles, never knowing whether he has commissioned a masterpiece or been gulled by a knave.

On the other side of the bargain, the cultural servant also plays a comic part. He must affect a haughty manner, but not so haughty that he offends against the canons of the common man. He can afford to take only so many liberties with his institutional masters (corporate boards or directors of congressional committees), and he must be careful not to disturb the equilibrium of the presiding fashion. It doesn't matter whether the fashion happens to have a classical or nihilist surface. A

bureaucracy by definition administers the established order of objects or reputations. Its habit of dependence, together with its nervous cast of mind, inclines the cultural bureaucracy to bestow its awards on the already arrived, on the eminently acclaimed, on those artists and authors who come bearing certificates of approval and letters of recommendation from the Ford Foundation or The New York Times.

ERHAPS this is why, as George Steiner observed some months ago in his essay "The Archives of Eden," the American cultural enterprise reflects such a conservative bias. Never in the history of the world have so many people trooped through so many museums or been provided with so many classical texts, reproductions, musical performances, libraries, concordances, and adult education programs. Almost every hamlet in the country boasts a dance group, an atheneum, and an orchestra.

All this coming and going undoubtedly constitutes an immense social good and accords with the meliorist precepts characteristic of the United States since the eighteenth century. If the expansion of knowledge and the advancement of learning benefit the individual as well as the republic as a whole, who can quarrel with the display of culture so generously strewn around the countryside and so assiduously collected in air-conditioned yaults?

The question addresses the purpose of the national cultural subsidy in both its public and private aspects. If patrons intend to provide what their brochures sometimes describe as "life-enhancing experience" for large numbers of people who otherwise might not have a chance to see Picasso's paintings or a fourteenth-century Chinese bronze, even the surliest critic would be hard put to find fault. But if it is the intention of the donors to encourage the making of American art and thought, then the dominion of bureaucratic taste tends to smother-albeit with affection-the movement of spirit. Unparalleled in its dedication

to the past and to the preservation of the European collection, the tural bureaucracy remains, perhaporately, suspicious of people via anything new to say.

Steiner offers as a metaphor Stradivarii on display in the Coolin Room of the Library of Congress

They hang lustrous, each millimeter restored, analyzed, recorded. They hang safe from the vandalism of the Red Brigades, from the avarice or cynical indifference of dying Cremona... Americans come to gaze at them in pride; Europeans in awed envy or gratitude. The instruments are made immortal. And stone dead.

Something of this same lifelessne infuses the opera performed at L coln Center, the monographs pulsished under the auspices of the NF or the NEA, the public-affairs pagramming on PBS, and the proceedings of the Aspen Institute. No mater how brilliant the performanchow polished and technically correct the surface of the prose, the woltself seems to have been arranging with the busy tidiness of the notic counter in a well-kept department store.

### III

The distinction between the passin and the active voice.

theaters across the country during June of this year, an within three days had earne over \$14 million. Raiders of the Lo. Ark, another of the summer's epitales, earned \$50 million during the first twenty-six days of its release.

If Americans can spend suc princely sums on opéra bouffe, wh is it implausible to hope that the might spend even a fraction of the amount on works in more difficul genres? It certainly isn't a questio of money. The Reagan administratio contemplated reducing the federa cultural subsidy from \$338 milliot to \$167 million, the appropriation divided almost equally between the NEA and the NEH. In the order

# HERE'S WHAT'S NOW BEING SAID ABOUT TOBACCO SMOKE IN THE AIR.



Several months ago, headlines around the world trumpeted alarming news. A Japanese study was claiming that non-smoking wives of smokers had a higher risk of lung cancer because of their husbands' tobacco smoke. That scared a lot of people and understandably so, if this claim was the last word.

But now new headlines have appeared. First, because several eminent biostatisiicians found an apparent statistical error in the Japanese calculations—raising serious questions about the study.

Second, because Lawrence Garfinkel, the statistical director of the American Cancer Society who is opposed to smoking, published a report covering 17 years and nearly 200,000 people in which he indicated that "second-hand" smoke has insignificant effect on lung cancer rates in nonsmokers.

If you'd like to know more about these developments, write Scientific Division, The Tobacco Institute, 1875 I St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

# BEFORE YOU BELIEVE HALF THE STORY, GET THE WHOLE STORY.

Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

# PHYLOGENY II:

by E. A. Muir

Why does he sing to her and make huge pictures and not only of her and her mysteries? What does her laughter

mean to him that it should

make him proud?

Don't forget her children are born after a considerable period of encumbrance, into utter and enduring helplessness, which only love and skill can mend.

The brave, the swift, the strong flag and slow with the turnings of the seasons, their get not yet strong or swift enough for their courage.

and his and his And hers

Wit bound the stone on the stick, imitating an arm, and made it longer.

His couplings with her showed him how time could stop.
And since she was never out of season, forever losable, it was a simple matter to invent eternity. And its Inhabitant.
Swelling her store of fears, which only love and wit could stay.

Rapt in their good time, how could he stop at anything that made it longer.

Yet nothing, fear included, could still the causeless, never out-of-season worm of her kind's unhappiness, that turned him,

his father and his sons helpless as any child and needing mending. of American magnitudes, even the larger sum amounts to about an hour's worth of the year's national product. The television networks spend a million dollars to broadcast the Superbowl game, and in the space of a week the great advertising agencies probably commission television commercials worth, in aggregate, as much as the entire budget of the New York State Council for the Arts.

Last summer in Rhode Island I watched a production crew make a thirty-second film of a new car; the shooting cost \$96,000, needed three days' worth of the light at sunrise and sunset, twenty vehicles, and a cast of seagulls. The cost of the time on network television was expected to come to another \$200,000

Given the number of wealthy and eccentric citizens in our country, many of whom have amassed riches infinitely greater than those of even the most covetous Renaissance pope, why do so few of them feel moved to commission works of art? Perhaps they don't care to, but if this is true, on what grounds comes the complaint that the government (or the foundation or the corporation) refuses to provide people with what they will not provide themselves?

Art cannot exist without a passionate and discriminating audience, but despite the numbers of people shuffling past King Tut's gold, the evidence suggests that the United States has not yet developed such an audience.

Over the last generation a few thousand pianists have no doubt become competent enough to get all the way through "The Well-Tempered Clavier"; many more thousands of poets, potters, weavers, and students of creative writing have enjoyed innumerable hours of communion with the muse of their choice. Nobody could begrudge them their pleasure or accomplishment, and maybe this is the entire and proper purpose of the cultural subsidy.

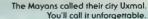
But what else is there to show for so much earnest endeavor? How many people read the literature of other languages or study the models of English prose set by Swift and the King James Bible? Who can tell the difference between a cello sonata performed by Rostropovich and the same music played by a second-year student at Juilliard? What six people can agree on a definition of art, of even care enough about the subject to get into an argument? Who has enough confidence in his own judgment to raise an articulate defens against the gang of critics promoting this week's masterojece?

By and large, the audience re mains as passive as it was before the advent of Mr. Herbert Schmertz and Senator Pell, an audience astonished by celebrity and opulent spectacle eager to consume whatever the mer chants in New York and Washington distribute under the designer label of culture. It is an audience that as sociates freedom with nower, no with thought, an audience restlessly in search of diversion rather than balance of mind. The buyers press ing through the doors of the New York auction galleries have come to seize the insignia of power and success. Because there are more millionaires in Kansas than there are paintings by Degas or Cézanne, the market bids up the price of almost any painter with a foreign name. The buyers have made their mark in the world, and they want it known that they, too, have won through to virtue and that they possess the outward and visible signs of an inward and spiritual grace. The old painting on the wall corresponds to a marker buoy floating over the site of Spanish treasure.

The appreciation of high art reguires not only thought but also some technical understanding of what's being done, but Americans tend to bring this kind of informed judgment to their fondness for cars, handicrafts, and computer systems -for objects that move and do things, as opposed to those that merely sit there and wait to be understood. The American spirit has a Faustian rather than an Apollonian cast, and it is typical of the national curiosity that it is much more interested in what Van Gogh's crazed hand did to his ear than in what his incomparable eye saw in the sunlight of Arles.

This is the second of two articles.

HARPER'S/OCTOBER 1981



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# SUPREME IRONY

The court of last resort

by Peter Brimelow and Stephen J. Markma

ITHIN weeks of Ronald Reagan's inauguration, several lawsuits were filed challenging the legality of his retroactive hiring freeze on federal recruiting. A public-interest group called Energy Action announced a suit protesting decontrol of petroleum prices. Public Citizen, Ralph Nader's public-interest lobby, sued Health and Human Services secretary Schweiker over policy toward generic (non-brand-name) drugs. And a number of legal challenges to the proposed freeze on federal regulations were being discussed. All of which was presaged by the Washington Star directly after the election:

Noting the three recent appointments of well-known liberal activ-

Peter Brimelow is an associate editor of Barron's, and lives in Washington, D.C. Stephen J. Markman is general counsel for the Senate Judiciary Committee's subcommittee on the Constitution.

ists to the U.S. Court of Appeals
—Abner Mikva, Patricia Wald
and Ruth Bader Ginsburg—one
public interest lawyer commented:
"The courts now loom as the
most congenial branch of the federal government. We may have
to return to litigation to take
advantage of this asset."

It is important to realize what is going on here. One faction in American politics—whether or not it represents "the public interest"—has lost an election. Its policies may be reversed. It proposes to prevent that by appealing to the courts. It trusts the courts not because of the law but because of the judges. They are members of the same faction.

In Britain, Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition is to be found in the legislature. In Ronald Reagan's America, opposition is centered on the bench. It will almost certainly be neither loyal to, nor even impressed

by, his mandate. And behind this of position lurks a more ominous posibility: that our political culture losing sight of the ideal of an in partial law.

HAT THERE has been an extraordinary invasion of ev ery area of American life b the federal judiciary in the past twenty-five years is now under niable. At one time, it was fashion able for supporters of this judicia activism to argue that the Suprem Court under Chief Justice Charle Evans Hughes had been equally ur restrained in 1935-36 when it rule vital New Deal legislation unconst tutional. But there is a distinction The Hughes Court was reviewing perhaps overenthusiastically, the ac tions of a reforming legislature Now, however, Supreme Court just tices and a host of inferior judge



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are themselves reforming society, in the most detailed and aggressive way, not merely without the sanction of elected lawmakers, but often in a direction diametrically opposed to that in which they or their constiuents might have wished to go.

It is an open secret that most major social reforms of the last generation have been accomplished by the judiciary. In what amounts to a cloverleaf of Damascus Roads, the Supreme Court has declared unconstitutional such previously accepted practices as segregation, capital punishment, school prayer and has unilaterally effected one-man, one-vote state legislative apportionment, affirmative action, abortion on demand, and the abolition of residency laws for wel-

Each of these ends had devoted advocates who were not inclined to question the means by which they were achieved. But presumably evervone would have preferred to see legislatures rewriting the necessary statutes, or amending the Constitution. As matters stand, it is only a matter of time before someone realizes that the judicial branch in general and the Supreme Court in particular are the modern equivalent of the Wizard of Oz. They have no power other than the awe inspired by the Constitution. But a fundamental organic law capable of such profound reinterpretation at the drop of a Supreme Court justice or two, and their replacement by political opponents, is no sort of law at all.

Perhaps the confusion that exists in the minds of lawyers on the point has helped postpone that awful day. In his autobiography, The Court Years, William O. Douglas claimed that when he joined the Supreme Court in 1939, Chief Justice Hughes told him that constitutional decisions were 90 percent emotional: "the rational part of us supplies the reasons for supporting our predilections." Douglas says he took this advice to heart. There is every reason to believe him. He once remarked that he was more interested in creating a precedent than finding one. Nobody did more to convince American lawyers that they should study not the Constitution but the Supreme Court.

Yet there at the end of his book is the poor old U.S. Constitution, reproduced as an appendix, like an Orthodox priest drafted to sprinkle holy water on Red Army tanks.

And there can be no dispute about the degree of judicial ambition displayed in the endlessly proliferating minor cases as well. In Texas last vear, U.S. District Court Judge Gabrielle McDonald ordered a public station to screen "Death of a Princess"-a controversial television film it had canceled after Saudi Arabian protests. In South Dakota, U.S. District Court Judge Donald Porter ruled that ranchers must stop using certain chemicals approved by the Environmental Protection Agency to combat a grasshopper plague. In Washington, Judge Barrington Parker ordered the army to upgrade less than honorable discharges given to some 10,000 Vietnam-era veterans found to be abusing drugs, following compulsory urinalyses that Parker said were "statements" covered by Fifth Amendment protection against self-incrimination. In Rhode Island, Judge Raymond J. Pettine forced school administrators to allow a homosexual student to take a male date to his senior prom. In Mississippi, Judge Orma Smith ordered the state to supply to high schools a textbook previously rejected because of its controversial stress on black history. The California supreme court recently held intelligence tests to be unconstitutional. In all of these cases, elected legislators and appointed officials found themselves stymied by arbitrary fiat, any challenge to which must be mounted against the forces of inertia and cost that are invariably decisive in politics. None of the rulings bore any serious relationship to the intentions of the Constitution's framers, traditionally the standard by which legal problems are judged. Yet they explicitly contradicted political solutions.

HIS SITUATION is largely the fault of our tremulous legislators. A classic illustration was provided by *Washington Monthly* when in 1979 it sent purported pro- and anti-abortion letters

to every senator, demanding to knó his or her position. No ancient Gre ever fled in more terror from truries than the average politic hack from these two ferocious lo bies, and the result was the expered mixture of silence and meal mouthed or contradictory replic One, however, was particularly sinificant. Senator Donald E. Rieg (Dem.-Mich.) replied that he preferred "to leave the issue to the courts."

And this has been the way in which a whole generation of legislators has finessed enraged constituents in a era of social unheaval.

A dim awareness of these deve opments lay behind last year's ado tion by the Republican Party, alor with Ronald Reagan, of a plan urging that no judge be appointed who favored abortion. Some lawver and commentators claimed this was a attempt to impose a political "li mus test" on the judiciary, althoug it is the inexorable consequence ( a system where the personal opin ions of judges become law. How ever, it is doubtful that even the Republicans realized the extent to which their ideological opponen had become entrenched during the Carter administration

The significance of the Carter acministration in this area was a resu of the 1978 Omnibus Judgeship Ac which congressional Democrats ha kept on ice for six years, waiting fo a Democratic president. This estal lished 117 new federal judgeship and thirty-five additional circu judgeships, all lifetime appointments Making allowances for normal attrition, this meant that during his terr of office Carter was able to appoin nearly half the federal bench.

Judges have to be confirmed be the Senate. But Jimmy Carter under took that this new wave would be selected "strictly on merit." Since in fact, his appointments constitute a court-packing scheme unparallele in American history, it is temptin to think that this was a deliberat deception. Certainly it was incompatible with his simultaneous comment that "if I didn't have to ge Senate confirmation for all my judicial appointees, I could just tell your confirmation for all my judicial appointees, I could just tell your senate of the confirmation for all my judicial appointees, I could just tell your senate confirmation for all my judicial appointees, I could just tell your senate confirmation for all my judicial appointees, I could just tell your senate confirmation for all my judicial appointees, I could just tell your senate confirmation for all my judicial appointees.

tly that 12 percent would be Spanespeaking and 40 percent would women and so forth." But Carter s sufficiently sincere to enrage the en chairman of the Senate Judirry Committee, James Eastland Jem.-Ala.), before he finally diluthis proposals and restored the atral role of his party's senators in oosing their state's judges.

The story is quickly told. A mere percent of Carter's judicial nomes identified themselves, in a 1979 vey taken by the American Juditure Society, as "conservative," alough self-professed conservatives minate similar polls in the country large. The rest were either "very eral," "liberal," or "moderate." Agh proportion were active in Dem-

ratic Party politics.

The difficulty for any conservative ministration is not merely that so any of its ideological opponents thus immovably clamped to the blic trough, nor even that proliferion of judges will shorten dockets d leave them time for mischiefaking elsewhere. The difficulty is e judicial philosophy espoused by e Carter appointees. They are the ildren of the 1960s, not just beuse of their birth dates—Myron Soell, a black appointed to the bench

Alabama, is thirty-four, seven ars out of law school; Archibald ox was eliminated as too old at sty-eight. Unwilling to accept any straint on their desires, they are lick to invent rationales for their stions. The Constitution is a "liv-g law," "flexible" enough for an evolving" society.

Sometimes even rationales were ispensed with. Henry Pregerson, sked by the committee what he ould do if confronted with a conct between his conscience and the ear letter of the law, unflinchingly plied that he would abide by the ormer. Nathaniel Jones denounced me recent Supreme Court decions limiting school busing as the culmination of a national anti-black rategy," which included congresional approval of policies that drip with racist anti-city and antiusing features." Stuart Newblatt, then questioned by Senator Robert lole, said that he was and would

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ca Linue to be a "judicial activist."

Legislators encourage this focus on social goals rather than legal procedure. Democratic-appointed nominating commissions throughout the country routinely inquired into candidates' views on ERA, school busing, and abortion.

EPHBLICAN senators have sat back and let this tranformation of the judicial branch happen. No one dissented from any of the nominations mentioned. Partly this is because opposing the candidate of another senator is a serious breach of Senate etiquette. In part, Republicans were intimidated by the tendency to see the question of a nominee's "qualifications" as solely a matter of academic and professional credentials, particularly since few legislators have the Ivy League veneer of top liberaldom. And, of course, no one wanted to appear sexist or racist, especially since this was one of the few flaws for which the nominees themselves were being exhaustively examined. So strong was this last reflex, in fact, that it resulted in the confirmation of a black attorney, U. W. Clemon of Alabama, even though the American Bar Association ruled him technically "unqualified."

The only nominee to be rejected, the first in forty-three years, was Charles Winberry of North Carolina, against whom there were criminal and ethical allegations. Ironically, Winberry's judicial philosophy would probably have been relatively unobjectionable. His supporters felt strongly that he should not be penalized in the absence of criminal proof.

The Reagan administration and the Republicans now controlling the Senate campaigned on policies radically different from their liberal predecessors. Should they actually wish to implement them, public-interest groups, in cooperation with sympathetic judges, will be able to stage even more effective counterattacks, right down the line.

For example, President Reagan could revise equal-opportunity directives such as Executive Order 11246.

which time and the bureaucracy have twisted into an excuse to impose racial and sexual quotas on the public service only to have the courts announce that such orders merely implemented a statistical balance that was constitutionally required all the time. Welfare and public housing might turn out to be "rights" unassailable without an entitlement of "due process" unsuspected by the Reconstructionist Congress that invented the Fourteenth Amendment Reduction of federal aid to education could be attacked on the grounds that it perpetuates discrimination by placing a premium on a community's willingness and ability to support local education. Or it might be challenged for impeding a child's "right" to be instructed in his mother tongue. Efforts to restructure the bureaucracy might run foul of the increasingly expressed view that federal employees enjoy certain property rights in their positions. The freedom of the executive to alter environmental or workplace safety regulations is equally vulnerable. Even foreign policy-the re-recognition of Taiwan. or the exercise of the war power-is a target for ambitious lawvers, on or off the bench. There are no limits to what can be done with such "evolving" concepts as "commerce among the several states," "general welfare," "due process," and "equal protection."\*

\* Recent developments include: a Texas court ordering the expansion of school bilingualism in the teeth of the new administration's policy of de-emphasis; the District of Columbia Appeals Court moving against the proposal that federal employees should pay for their parking; a Tennessee court refusing to allow a reduction of outpatient visits to meet federally imposed spending cuts. On the state level, a Florida court has struck down an attempt to make functional literacy tests a prerequisite for high-school grade changes and graduation; the Massachusetts supreme court has required Boston to keep its school system open although it has already exhausted its budget. There has been an attempt by four officials of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to retrieve their jobs, citing a 1980 Supreme Court decision; a suit filed by a group of congressmen (!) to preserve certain Vietnamveteran hiring programs; a threat by the District of Columbia government to sue to prevent the reduction of its CETA grants

Against this, Reagan may get th opportunity to appoint several S preme Court justices Five sittir judges are over seventy, and tw others are in their mid-sixties these. Justice Stewart has alread announced his retirement But eve if Reagan's choices behave as I hopes—a dubious proposition, as F senhower discovered with Earl Wa ren-it will be too late. Years wou elanse before the rulings of such court would be made and would filt down to the lower courts And eve then there would be plenty of oppotunity for other kinds of judicial of struction

EAGAN'S real defense will } to use the teaching power of the presidency to focu public debate on the issu of judicial supremacy. Few huma conflicts are carried to a logical conclusion; this applies even to ones in volving lawyers. The courts follo the election returns, particular when they are as devastating as thos of 1980. It is possible that a ful blown crisis such as occurred i 1935-36 can be avoided, if the jud ciary is sufficiently impressed to cur its ambition. The caliber of the acministration's legal officers will als be vital in what will be a struggle for moral advantage.

A second part of any strategy t redress the balance between th branches of the government must b to foster cooperation between the legislature and the executive. Fortu nately for Reagan, his party has grip on the Senate that it will prol ably strengthen in 1982. The Housremains in liberal hands, but crypto conservatives in the Democrati ranks are crawling out of their hole to lend a hand.

One result of this may be successful legislation to limit venue-shoppin by litigants in search of sympatheti judges, as well as the extension c venue in environmental and regula tory cases beyond the District c Columbia federal court. Addition ally, Congress may take initiative designed to curb specific example of judicial legislation. For example there will be serious consideration

constitutional amendments that uld overturn Supreme Court decine in the areas of school prayer, ortion, affirmative action, and nool busing—the latter already reing its way to the floor of a restant House in 1980. Congress also set he areane power (under Article I. Section 2 of the Constitution) withdraw subjects from the jurisction of the courts if sufficiently ovoked.

An attempt to exercise this auority in the case of school prayer arly succeeded in the House, folwing Senate approval, at the end the 96th Congress, to general perrbation and the great interest of institutional lawyers. Other proused efforts would limit the tenure federal court judges or expose eir decisions to review by an even gher authority, like the "Court of e Union," made up of the chief stices of the fifty states, or by a vo-thirds vote of Congress in the ise of decisions overturning state : federal legislation.

But the great problem conservaves face in considering their opons is that they themselves have een infected with the disease they re supposed to be fighting. The platorm pledge to nominate anti-aboron judges, however understandable, as one symptom. Another is the endency of conservatives to believe at the solution is merely to appoint onservative judges.

This is a fatal error. Academic and rofessional distinction may not be sential for a federal judge—witess Earl Warren or Hugo Black. ntangible "moral" questions may be jointless, which was the argument sed in Winberry's defense and successfully) during the 1970 attempt to impeach the colorful Justice Douglas.

It may even be natural and harmess that politicians should hand out udgeships—as well as every other blum they can get their hands on—o colleagues, cronies, school friends, and the husbands of mistresses. None of this would matter—if the judges enforced the law. Yet willingness to enforce the law impartially, whether it is one written by liberal lawmakers or conservatives, is precisely what is

now being cast aside with a worldly, if opportunistic, shrug.

HEN THE British established their empire and set up courts, it was common for magistrates to be approached by natives bearing gifts, hoping to encourage favorable rulings on the suits in which they were involved. This, after all, was how justice had always been done in their societies. The British had to explain that they came from a superior tradition: their law was not the whim of a despot but an objective thing, impartially administered and equal for all. The natives were naturally skeptical. But the British meant it, and in time able native lawyers became indispensable to every independence movement.

It is this Anglo-American tradition that is now in danger of being forgotten. A recent example was the Supreme Court's ruling in *United* Steelworkers v. Weber, which upheld the use of racial quotas in employment despite their express prohibition in the 1964 civil rights legislation. In a dissent of unprecedented bitterness, Justice Rehnquist described the majority's position as Orwellian in its reversal of the facts.

In other words, the natives were right. All the paraphernalia of carefully debated legislation and painstaking legal research is meaningless. The courts rule according to their personal values and interests. Earl Warren was doing this when he developed the habit of interrupting technical legal arguments to demand, "But is it right? Is it good?" in defiance of the first lessons of law school. Conservatives may legislate, and they may even appoint or intimidate enough judges to prevail for a while. But without the concept of an objective law to act as a keel, the ship of state will be inherently unstable. Liberal judges can send it rolling back again as soon as they regain courage. There is no source of legitimacy in a polity where laws are made and changed without the sanction of popular will, expressed through legislation.

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# THE SHAME OF PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS

How not to educate an elite

by Andrew Hack

or years professional education was America's pride and joy. Our schools of medicine, law, and business pioneered new methods and launched their students on challenging careers. That era is now over. Today even topranked schools face increasing criticism. And in large measure they have brought it on themselves. Moreover, the culprits are members of their faculties, who have turned the schools into vehicles for their personal nursuits.

These charges become convincing once we look inside the institutions, especially their classrooms, where the teachers have control. Needless to Andrew Hacker teaches political science at Queens College in New York City.

say, law, medicine, and business are different disciplines; and schools within each field vary in their approaches. Still, some basic patterns prevail. And the most common of these is that the schools care surprisingly little about the needs of their own students, or those of the larger society our professions supposedly serve.

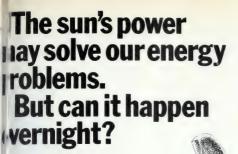
Medical education is the best place to begin, because there we confront the view that only physicians are entitled to opinions on their own professional training. The mystique surrounding medicine makes it difficult to discuss what a doctor needs to know. The layman hears that medicine is a science, based on biology and chemistry, achieving new and

better cures through the marvels is technology. And on the basis of the premise, American medical school have made science and research the principal priorities.

This development is fairly recent Reacting to the Soviet success wi Sputnik, the United States begg pouring money into every branch science. Medical schools applied for and received much of this largess They had always realized that pre tige went to professors who carrie on research: there is no Nobel prize for running a clinic in the Ozark Thus opened the "scientific era" medical education, Dr. Daniel Fur kenstein, in a report to the Iosia Macy Foundation, described who happened next: "Faculties compose primarily of scientists sought to re produce themselves. They wanted graduate physicians who were prima ily scientists, who would do research or be in a bioscientifically oriente subspecialty." As a consequence, hi report continued, the medical schools "curriculum changed in a directio which was more and more irrelevar to the practice of medicine."

That this irrelevance is now er trenched is documented by Charle LeBaron in Gentle Vengeance, an ac count of his first year as a student a Harvard Medical School. "Hardly lecture goes by," he noted in his joun nal, "without someone suggestin that perhaps one of us will be th scientist who will unlock the secret of eukaryotic gene deregulation of the causes for the deposition of ath erosclerotic plaques." Nor does this happen only at Harvard. School





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In fact, few medical schools have teaching faculties in the usual sense What has happened is that physicians who like to do research know that the best way to get a grant is to have a medical-school affiliation. The schools in turn oblige by taking them aboard with the title of professor, which they try to justify by scheduling several lectures. In fact they devote these classroom appearances to esoteric findings from their corner of research, without bothering to show what connection, if any, it has with medical practice. These drop-in professors are not even on the payroll, as the money for their salaries is included in their grants. An upper-class student explained the setup to LeBaron: "Harvard doesn't really employ these guys at all. Being on the faculty is just a system for getting grant money. And teaching us is a minor annovance. Everyone gives a different lecture. They spread it out."

OT SURPRISINGLY, all candidates for medical school must have straight A's in science to have their applications opened. After all, from the moment they arrive they will be required to absorb physiology and histology, biochemistry and neurobiology. There is only one problem with this rule. It was well put in an editorial in the Journal of Medical Education. "Selection is primarily directed at finding individuals who are likely to survive the first year ... where few of the characteristics of the effective physician are required for success." In other words, to be allowed on the first rung of the medical ladder, one must have excelled in studies that have little or no relation to performance as a doctor. As it turns out, the applicants medical schools most want often make mediocre physicians. Dr. John Rhoads of the Duke University School of Medicine reached this sad conclusion in an eight-year study. He found that those who ranked highest in the science courses drew below-average ratings in their clinical work. Not only

that, Dr. Rhoads noted, "their performance with patients was subtly disturbing because they appeared to be uninterested in patients as people."

At this juncture an obvious question arises. Don't we want our doctors-all our doctors, including family practitioners—to have a good grounding in science? Before automatically answering, "Of course," it would be better to ask how much scientific knowledge a practicing physician needs. The problem is that biochemistry and bacteriology and other scientific subjects are all endless journeys. Students will always know "less" about them than they might if they took yet another course or a further year of study. It is possible to reach a point where too much scientific study can actually detract from proficiency as a personal physician

Nor should it be thought that the last two clinical years make up for lost time. In those years the students do see patients, but mainly in the hospital attached to their medical school. This means that their first contact is with people at an advanced stage of illness, where hospitalization is necessary. Moreover, they spend a disproportionate part of their rounds observing cases that interest their professors, whose own clinical research is apt to focus on unusual diseases. And as teaching hospitals have the most advanced equipment, students are taught to rely on finely tuned technologies instead of their instincts. Patients are diagnosed and treated in terms of what is on the printout, inevitably a skewed reflection of the total person. So medical students begin to view illnesses as somehow disconnected from the individuals who have them.

This is not the place to examine all the problems—or achievements—of American medicine. We have quite spectacular cures for serious afflictions, and some of these stem from basic scientific research. No one wishes to return to horse-and-buggy days. At the same time, the lofty level of medical education has left a gaping hole in the nation's health care. Seldom do medical professors, all of whom are specialists,

offer students simple hints on hy to help someone who comes to a ditor's office with a vague complair. Yet that is where medical practices should begin and where medicines still an art. It demands a templament that takes individuals serioly, joined with an intuition for seing what is wrong. Perhaps the qualities can't be taught. If not, mo ical schools would do well to greater preference to applicants we seem to have them.

At this point we have over 65.0 students in our 125 medical school and according to a growing number of studies they are more than really need. But in recent years have had a shortage of people train and willing to serve as first-sta practitioners. Medical faculties, ho ever, show no serious interest in ehancing such care. Professional reutations simply are not made the way, Imagine asking Johns Hopkir for example, to assign half its stdents to a "bachelor of medicin" program, with less stress on put science, Or suggesting to Columb or Cornell that it create evening courses to enable experienced nurs to qualify as physicians. (The lacof enthusiasm over midwives reflectheir attitude.) But why should the The professors are happy with thin as they are because they have been allowed to run their schools alor lines they find congenial. The san cannot be said for increasing nur bers of Americans, who feel that the kind of care they want no longer i terests the medical profession.

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too young for a position of any challenge, let alone responsibility. Business schools keep college graduates on hold for two additional years, by which time they look mature enough for a middle-sized desk. As a matter of fact many of the schools suggest that their applicants do something else-almost anything will do-for a year or two before enrolling. That way they will be twenty-five or twenty-six when they get their MBA's and are set for serious employment.

The problem is what to do with business students while they are on the campus. At last count, the nation had over 400 such schools, graduating more than 50,000 students annually at the master's level. However, two thirds of these students get their degrees through part-time study, as often as not at night. It is only the two dozen schools at the top that require full-time attendance and have serious pretensions to being professional training grounds. To enhance this status, they start off by giving their students overpowering assignments, fostering the impression that there is more to know than they can ever learn. This regimen persuades those who survive that they are a special cadre, entitled to preferential treatment once their course has been completed.

What they study is determined by their professors, who have a free hand in shaping the curriculum. This is because business firms, who will hire the MBA's, do not really care what they have studied. They tend to recruit on the strength of general prestige rankings-Harvard, Stanford, Chicago, Wharton-without scrutinizing the curriculum. This is probably just as well. For what happens in the schools is that students play at being executives. These exercises take two general forms.

HE FIRST is the "case method," pioneered at Harvard and still the staple there. The cases are stories made up by faculty members, outlining a business situation where a problem must be solved or a key decision made. A case might deal with launching a new product, acquiring a subsidiary, or meeting foreign competition. At Harvard students read over 10,000 pages of cases each year and discuss them solemnly in class. The idea is to impart a feel for what it's like in husiness, especially up on top where strategy is made.

The other pace-setting schools take a different tack. They tend to look on case studies as kindergarten stuff. insufficiently sophisticated for the modern business world. Stanford. for example, calls its basic courses "Decision Sciences I & II." Carnegie-Mellon offers "Analytic Models for Management Decision-Making" and "Mathematical Models for Management Science." Chicago goes even further, requiring all its students to have at least a year of college calculus. They will then be ready for courses in "Digital System Simulation" and "Cognitive Models of Judgment," not to mention "Bayesian Inference in Econometrics.'

The very titles of these courses attest to their academic origin. Business schools are parts of universities and prefer to be seen in that way. Their professors, for example, are not executives who have switched to teaching careers. On the contrary, business schools make it a point of pride that their faculties have gone the academic route and have proper Ph.D.'s. (At Chicago, all the associate professors hold doctorates, as do forty-six of the forty-nine with fullprofessor rank.) The typical business professor has never worked in business, except perhaps as a consultant; and one would be hard pressed to cite a single faculty member who was asked to join a company in a top executive post. Rather they do what most professors do: teach, and do research addressed to their fellow professors in monographs and journals no one else ever reads. The exception again is Harvard, whose Harvard Business Review is written in well-edited prose. However, the other business schools, in a recent poll of their deans, deposed Harvard from its No. 1 spot because its faculty was teaching and writing on a level laypeople could understand. Stanford, which uses computers to teach "Creativity in Business," took its place.

Corporations continue to hire MA graduates because they constitutes available pool of recruits, readyn attune themselves to a company of life. It is far easier to limit of search to this specific group to contend with a flood of candida who come in off the street. Wat skills do the MBA's bring with the on their first day of work? By large they do best in divisions voted to "analysis," which me manipulating figures and churn out reports. No one can say for s to what degree such data affect de porate decisions, Nevertheless, fir generally seen happier if material this sort is somewhere on their des Even so, some companies have I gun to complain that business-sch graduates know less than they this they do, or want to make company wide policy as soon as they arri (Stanford has a course called "Ma agement of the Total Enterprise. Others blame their mathematic training for an overconcern will short-term paper profits. In fact the objections are misplaced, for the ascribe to business education mo influence than it has

The test for the business school might be resolved by their own mat ematical models. The computer coul be asked whether the behavior American business would be perce tibly different if there were no MBA at all in its executive ranks. Whi we know now is that while busines school graduates begin with high salaries, others soon catch up. Son MBA's make it to the top; but so d plenty of people who began as el

gineers.

AW SCHOOLS serve useful purposes. For college grad uates who have no firm ■ idea of what they want t do, law school gives them three mor years in which to make up thei minds. Moreover, law is seen as profession that combines a comfor able income with the chance to d some good, so it seems a natural ste for liberal-arts students. Because o this, the country's 177 accredite law schools now enroll over 125.00 students, almost double the figure of lozen years ago. Moreover, women w constitute 33.5 percent of the al, as against 26.5 percent for dical schools, and about 20 pertin business.

Universities also like their law nools. They are inexpensive to opate, and some have even made a ofit. This is because classes are ge and virtually all students pay full tuition, more than 70 pernt doing so through loans they ast repay someday. The schools reace they are producing many more aduates than the economy can abrb. None, however, have set in mon plans for curtailing their enrollents. If pressed, they murmur that gal training can be useful in other nds of jobs.

The first year, of law school can be scribed as learning the language id culture of a foreign country. It n't intellectually demanding work, it rather a crash course in memizing hundreds of terms and renements in their meanings. Some ourses involve little more than diction, where students do their best copy down every word the prossor says. Other classes allow for articipation, at least of a sort. The rofessor brings to every lecture a st of perhaps a dozen students, who ill be called on to state the facts of case or some aspect of an arguient. As no one knows when he or ne will be called, the effect is one f suspense and dread. Law schools all this technique the "Socratic nethod," in part because no matter hat answer a student gives the proessor has heard it before and can how it to be wrong.

What the schools do claim to each is a special kind of logic they ave labeled "legal reasoning." When ou emerge from law school, you now how to think like a lawyer. In act, "legal reasoning" is nothing nysterious. It calls for sizing up a :lient's situation and giving it a seies of legal labels. The law is a set of categories, and what we expect from lawyers is that they find a sublivision that serves our best advanage. Many lawyers, looking back, agree that law schools could accomplish this preparation with a tighter, two-year program.

What law schools do best is train students in the kind of memorandum writing junior lawyers do in their first years with a firm. The talents that make for subsequent success are largely developed in the course of practice. For instance, lawyers are frequently called on to negotiate on behalf of clients: anything from a divorce to a tax assessment, a simple commercial lease to a complex corporate merger. Here the skills are personal, and few law schools try to teach them. They suspect it can't be done; and even if it could, faculty members are disinclined to take the

It is a law-school tradition that students do not approach professors. While all are not as formidable as John Houseman's Professor Kingsfield in The Paper Chase, the message gets across that if you have a question you should find the answer for yourself. Consequently, students spend much of law school huddling together trying to dope out just what their teachers want. While this may encourage self-reliance, it also means the professors only have to show up several hours a week. A few do some research; but many don't do even that. The number of law professors with national reputations is meager. A lot spend their spare time in parttime practice, augmenting their already generous salaries, which are second only to the medical faculty on most university payrolls.

HE MOST graphic sign of faculty indifference is found in admissions. Law professors have shown little concern over the way their students are chosen. Applicants are accepted or rejected primarily on the basis of how they score on a single threeand-a-half-hour test. Medical and business schools have similar examinations, but they are more apt to look at other items in candidates' folders. The Law School Admission Test, prepared by the Educational Testing Service, is taken every year by over 100,000 aspirants. Each one ends up with a score somewhere between 200 and 800, permitting fine divisions down to one sixth of a per-

## COULD YOU BE A LAWYER?

Questions from the LSAT

Janet: All Frenchmen are gourmets. Bill: That's not true. I know some Italians who live only to enjoy food. Bill's response shows that he has inter-

- preted Janet's remark to mean that
  (A) French cooking is the best in the
- (B) the French are superior to other peoples
- (C) only the French are gourmets
- (D) gourmets are people who enjoy food but not drink
- (E) Frenchmen are more likely to be gourmets than are persons of other nationalities

Judging from the tenor of the following statements and the apparent authoritativeness of their sources, which is most reasonable and trustworthy?

- (A) Senior professor: "My wife and I have been married for 35 blissful years, but this morning she put ground glass in my cereal."
- (B) Grandparents: "Our grandchildren are very polite and well-behaved."
- (C) Ph.D. in biochemistry: "Modern art is ridiculous. It does nothing more than a camera can do and only does it half as well."
- (D) Tantrum owner: "The Tantrum is ten times more beautiful than any other sports car."
- (E) Pilot and navigator: "We observed an unidentified aerial object approximately 4,000 feet above Washington."

Since all rabbits that I have seen have short tails, all rabbits probably have short tails.

Which of the following most closely parallels the kind of reasoning used in the sentence above?

- (A) Since all chemical reactions that I have seen have been undramatic, probably only minor changes took place in the substances involved.
- (B) Since all the human social systems that I have heard of have sexual taboos, all of these sexual taboos have probably had survival value for the human race.
- (C) Since all of the plays of Jovita Maldonado that I have seen feature a spurned lover, probably all of her plays feature this character type.
- (D) Since all eating utensils that I have seen are made of metal, metal is probably the most desirable material for eating utensils.
- (E) Since sight is the most important of man's five major senses, its failure probably seriously affects an individual's aptitude for all formal education.

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centage point, (The LSAT has finally decided to switch to a forty-point scale, starting next year.) The schools find this test tremendously convenient. Undergraduate transcripts are hardly worth inspecting, since standards among colleges vary and high marks are now the norm, the result of grade inflation. Letters of recommendation are equally useless as they tend to brim with praise. And many schools have so many candidates (Yale gets over 3,000 applicants for its 165 places) that they don't give interviews. The LSAT's provide a common denominator in which the schools feel they can have faith. So much so, one Columbia dean remarked, that "students have to have a certain score just to get their applications opened at some law schools."

The schools assert that test scores give a good idea of how applicants will perform in their first year of classes. But that year, it will be recalled, consists of large lectures for which mountains of material must be memorized. Despite the so-called Socratic method, analytic brilliance is neither wanted nor expected. Yet doubts have been raised as to how well the LSAT can predict even firstyear performance. At least one study. which ETS itself conducted "found the average LSAT score to correlate .35 with grades" in the first lawschool year; and in individual cases "the range went from .07 to .49." \* A correlation of less than .5 is pretty unreliable by any statistical standard. And this sample, of necessity, is limited to those who did well enough on the tests to get themselves admitted to law school. It follows that at least some who were rejected would have emerged as able students.

Despite these doubts, both the law schools and the test makers insist that the tests provide an index of "reasoning ability." This sounds impressive until one looks at the questions on the test. What they call for is a special kind of cleverness, the kind usually associated with playing parlor games. Some people take to such puzzles in an almost instinctual way:

they need but glance at a question to size up what it's all about. Those with minds of a different turn use up precious minutes trying to work out what in fact is wanted. (This is why coaching courses help. They explain the tricks of the trade.) The bias in the tests, then, is not just class based. Lots of students from well-off families have never gotten the knack of winning at charades.

At least one law-school dean, Peter Liacouras of Temple University, has admitted that "there has not been a single reported validation study of the LSAT in relation to lawvering performance—that is, which students will become the best lawvers." But then there is no sign that Temple or any other law school has tried to ascertain which human qualities produce a good attorney. So let me propose another modest project that might reveal an answer. (It could be tried equally well with physicians, although less so in business. where the criteria are different.) Pick out a city like Denver and interview a hundred lawyers, asking each to whom they would go if they had a serious legal problem. From this would emerge a roll of practitioners who had the respect and trust of their professional peers. That group could then be studied for its distinctive traits. Even more instructive would be to see how its members' records looked, back when they were twenty-one. Were they top prospects



for admission or did they just genunder the wire? Did they excellented they can be compared to the control of t

LMOST A quarter of a di tury ago Michael Young British sociologist, coi the term "meritocracy." referred to a society that would ma every possible effort to fill its positions with men and women superior ability. While Young's p posal was satirical. America took message seriously. In particul entry to professions would be bas on brains. That way justice would done and society best served. But one stopped to ask who should gual the gates or what standards world be set. As it turned out, profession schools became the aperture throu which people had to pass: and the faculty members were permitted decide what students had to know they wanted their diplomas. Like I professors, they looked for studen who were replicas of themselve whose skills were abstract and a ademic, who were at ease in a claroom and very good at tests. The might have been all right if wh America needed was a class of madarins

Our top professional schools ha ascended to such heights that the are out of touch with the ordinal conditions of our national life. T begin with mathematical models ar biochemical research, or even "leg reasoning," obscures the basic fa that any professional practice is very human calling. We are turnir out professionals who tend to loc on people as something of a bothe Not surprisingly, more than a fe patients, clients, and customers at beginning to rebel. And time is a their side. With an oversupply of professionals, some may forget who they were taught in school and b gin to ask how they might be service.

HARPER'S/OCTOBER 198

<sup>\*</sup>Andrew Strenio, The Testing Trap (Rawson, Wade). This book, published earlier this year, has a wealth of information on the standardized tests.



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# COOLIDGE REDUX

Making the world safe for plutocracy

by Walter Kari

N PRESIDENT Reagan's budget, which he grandly calls a "Program for Economic Recovery," there are innumerable curious items not easily reconciled with economic recovery or, indeed, with economics at all. They provide precious clues to what Reagan and his people really have in mind when they speak about our "national renewal."

There was, for example, a \$320 million "spending cut" that would have eliminated a federal program of financing legal aid for the poor-aid given without a single federal bureaucrat attached. Aside from handling family disputes (the bulk of the case load), federally funded lawyers help poor people defend their legislated rights against capricious welfare bureaucrats and chiseling slumlords. It was \$320 million -about the amount of an average Lockheed cost overrun-intended to fortify a fundamental republican maxim, the equality of each under the law. While the fund contributes to a noble principle of equity, the Walter Karp is a contributing editor of Harper's.

"saving" would have contributed to the ignoble practice of petty oppression, enhancing the power of local bureaucrats to chivvy and harass their clients-surely a curious objective for a president supposedly determined "to get the government off our backs." It would have strengthened the power of landlords to cheat and despoil their slum tenants, thereby making them more cynical, more alienated, more despairing than ever -a curious goal for an administration that wants to encourage Americans to work harder. The operative principle behind this pseudocontribution to "economic recovery" appears to be this: if you are too poor to defend your legal rights in court, that is your hard luck. If that makes the law a mockery to millions. so much the worse for the law.

Although the Reagan "Program for Economic Recovery" would compel the poor to accept their legal bad luck, the Reaganites apparently regard it as important to "recovery" to deprive poor people of anything resembling good luck. This is well illustrated by yet another item in the budget, a \$500 million "cut" i federal benefits for disabled workers An amputee with a stump for thigh who is living the life of Rile on various benefits-federal, insur ance, workmen's compensationthat add up to more than he earned before a truck crushed his leg wil be stripped of every penny of thi unmerited windfall. The contribu tion this "saving" makes to economic recovery is nil. It cannot encourage the disabled to work harder since they are, by definition, unable to work. Is it perhaps meant to dis courage the ablebodied from seek ing disablement? Only if you sup pose-and I doubt if even Reagan's chief advisers suppose-that many Americans are on the lookout for easy ways to lose a leg in order to enjoy an eventual pay raise.

The general Reaganite justification for odd deprivations such as these is President Reagan's avowed intention to bring federal spending "under control." However, an administration that proposes the larges military buildup in our peacetime history (including a \$45 billion in



ase for next year alone), that poses to spend \$6.2 billion on space shuttle and \$1.6 billion on extravagantly worthless nuclear eder-reactor cannot justify any 30 million spending cut on the ands of economy in government. Yet such cuts are made anyway 1 chiefly at the expense of those o can least afford them. This is nost curious policy for a president o recently condemned "a punie tax policy that takes 'from the other of labor the bread it has ned.'"

TRULY HOPE I am whipping a dead horse. I truly hope it is now obvious to everyone that LReagan's program for cutting lation and ending économic stagtion is not an economic program all. It is merely a pretext for rrying out certain fundamental litical goals that the American ople would never accept on their in ruthless terms. The torture of thousand cuts inflicted on the poor proposed as a means to recovery; e enrichment of the rich through x cuts and credits is justified as means to recovery; the restoration corporate power to poison the r, the water, and the workplace is stified as a means to economic covery. Does anyone seriously beeve any longer that these are meremeans? Does anyone believe any nger that Reagan is trying to comat inflation and bring federal spendg "under control" when the most aportant economic elements in his program" include a savagely inflaonary military buildup, a tax cut at will stimulate consumption, and 1 inflationary deficit of \$45 billion? Few reputable economists believe nat Reagan's chosen means will chieve his alleged goals. The stock tarket doesn't believe they will chieve his alleged goals. The big ivestors in bonds don't believe it ither. When Reagan's budget passed ze House, the financial world tremled in terror.

That is because Reagan's "proram" is a fraud, the pitiless exploiation of the American people's esperate wish to be rid of inflation.

What is more, it is a transparent fraud, like the "Emperor's New Clothes," as Senator Ernest Hollings of South Carolina recently described the Reagan budget. Reagan's secretary of the interior, James Watt, gave the shell game away back in March, when he candidly noted that "we will use the budget system to be the excuse to make major policy decisions." The White House gives the game away every time it reacts with chagrin to favorable economic reports. To the Reaganites, economic recovery now would rob them of their pretext before they could put it to use. In truth, the jiggery-pokery of "recovery" should have been obvious from the moment the Reagan budget appeared in mid-February. for the program Reagan now espouses as the cure for inflation, stagnation, and low productivity he espoused back in 1964, when there was no inflation, no stagnation, and high productivity. In other words, Reagan was promoting his "Program for Economic Recovery" before the reasons he now gives for espousing it even existed.

N THE COURSE of a recent address at Notre Dame, President Reagan paused to say a few tinny words about "a little band of men we call the founding fathers." According to Reagan "they gave us more than a nation. They brought to all mankind for the first time the concept that man was born free; that each of us has inalienable rights, ours by the grace of God." The president, of course, was borrowing from the Declaration of Independence, or, more precisely, amending it to suit the special political (and religious) requirements of National Renewal. The pertinent passage, written by Thomas Jefferson, reads as follows: "We hold these Truths to be selfevident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness." According to the Declaration we are born equal. This "created equal" stuff does not have the White House sanction, however, As one of

Reagan's chief aides remarked, equality was a principle "I don't accept." That is one reason, perhaps, why Reagan replaced the portrait of Jefferson in the Cabinet Room with a portrait of Calvin Coolidge, who held only one truth to be self-evident—that "the business of America is business."

Reagan's aversion to the principle of equality is readily explained by his budget, which is based on the conviction that the rich are not rich enough and the poor are not poor enough. Rich enough and poor enough for what? To that question, the president recently proposed an answer at a party for friendly congressmen. America's rich are not rich enough and our poor are not poor enough to arouse "the can-do spirit that made this country an industrial and economic giant."

There is a far deeper reason, however, for the Reaganite aversion to equality. The republic's historic assertion that "all men are created equal," which Lincoln regarded as a stumbling block to tyranny, is also a stumbling block to National Renewal. That we are created equal has never meant that Americans were supposed to live alike. What it does mean, what it has always meant, is that the citizens of this republic cannot be treated in law and by government as mere social and economic functions. Yet this is exactly how the Reaganites propose to treat the citizens of the commonwealth. The administration intends to bestow wealth upon the wealthy because it is their function to invest in productive enterprise. The administration intends to impoverish the poor because it is their function to perform menial services and not be a drag on investors.

To release capitalism from its republican bondage is what National Renewal is all about. It is about nothing else. The Reaganites do not care a fig for "budget austerity"—they proposed one of the more wasteful budgets of our time. They do not want "to get the government off our backs"—men who want to keep secret tabs on 25 million Americans want the government to stomp with unprecedented force on some peoper.

ple's backs. The Reaganites do not even care about the so-called free market, which is merely another one of their confidence games. A market dominated by price-fixers is neither very free nor much of a market, vet every would-be monopolist and conglomerateur in the country knows he has an ally in the White House The Reaganites are avowedly determined to weaken the antitrust laws. They tried to abolish the Federal Trade Commission's Bureau of Competition, which protects small businesses from big corporations. The Reaganite Justice Department even plans to give legal aid to conglomerate companies that are defendants in private antitrust suits. What Americans have cherished for two hundred years as private enterprise the Reaganites do not cherish at all.

What the Reaganites really care about is this: they want capitalism in America to become what Karl Marx thought it would be by nature—the transcendent force and the measure of all things, the power that reduces free politics to trifling, the citizen to a "worker," the public realm to "the state," the state to an instrument of repression protecting capitalism from the menace of liberty and equality, with which it grew up as Cain grew up with Abel.

O THE DEEP and genuine dismay of these patriots of capitalism, for that is what the Reaganites are, America's capitalists failed to secure their supposedly inevitable power. It is the self-imposed task of the Reaganites to do for America's capitalists what they could not do for themselves, namely, reduce the American republic to a nullity and turn constitutional government into "the state." Marx's description of capitalist society is the Reaganite prescription for America. That is the meaning of National Renewal.

Since the administration is still young, National Renewal, apart from the budget, consists mainly of symbolic acts and object lessons. As a matter of course, the White House turned its back on the principle of equality under law. Capitalism can-

not become the measure of all things as long as Americans cherish the maxims of the republic. As a matter of course, the Reaganites hope to turn public education into class education by financing a middle-class evodus from the common schools When they become schools for a class and not for the commonality. the American republic will have lost the only instrument capable of turning a mass of future jobholders into a plurality of citizens. The common schools of the republic are one of capitalism's fetters, and so of course they must be broken.

To secure the transcendence of capitalism the Reaganites must shrink the public realm drastically. What Americans have now established as public concerns—the quality of the environment, the safety of the workplace, fair employment, equal opportunity, the preservation of small business, the hundred and one conditions that secure or endanger the liberty, the dignity, and the independence of the citizenry—all such public matters the Reaganites hope to turn into private ones.

That objective lay behind the secretary of the interior's suggestion that visitors to Yosemite National Park be given the orientation lecture by the park's concessionaire, the Music Corporation of America, rather than by the Park Rangers. In his clumsy way Watt was grappling with a genuine obstacle to National Renewal. Every year the national parks give pleasure to millions of Americans. Every year, in consequence, they demonstrate that a public act can add to the public felicity, that the fruit of a purely public spirit can fill our hearts with pride. The parks. in short, are a standing argument -and an eloquent one-against making capitalism the measure of all things. What better solution than to let MCA greet the visitors and leave millions with the muddled impression that what Secretary Watt calls "market forces" (a governmentlicensed monopoly) created Yosemite and that "the profit motive" preserved the ponderosa pines.

It is this determination to shrink the public realm that lies behind the president's recent dictum that the taxing power "must not be used or regulate the economy or bring abore social change" (except the subvision of the common schools of the republic). Manipulating tax creeds has long been a conservative measof achieving public ends with creating government bureaucracing. By rejecting the taxing power as means, the Reaganites hope to slathed door shut on Republicans with the door s

As the public realm shrinks, t citizen fades, for the citizen is simp each of us in our public capacit freely swapping opinions about pull lic affairs. As the citizen fades in the jobholder, capitalism gains in measurably in power and freedor As in the 1920s, we would cease judge the economy by any standar save that of the most successful car italists; cease to ask whether a resulis equable or democratic, or whether an economy that gobbles up thou sands of small private enterprise bears any resemblance to private er terprise at all. Indeed, we woul cease to wonder why we should de spise representative government an submit to the arbitrary rule of pr vate economic power.

"This blessed land," as Reaga refers to capitalism plus a huge mili tary establishment, would be de graded beyond anything even Calvi Coolidge could achieve, because the Reaganites face an immense obstacle that Coolidge was spared. They mus force what is already public back into the darkness of privacy. This they can do only by constricting the free political life of the American people; for it is just that free po litical life that made public wha American leaders had usually fough to keep from the public realm. Cap italism is in bondage to political liberty as well as political equality

OT LONG after taking office
President Reagan pardoned
two high FBI officials convicted of violating the constitutional rights of their countrymen. According to the White House,

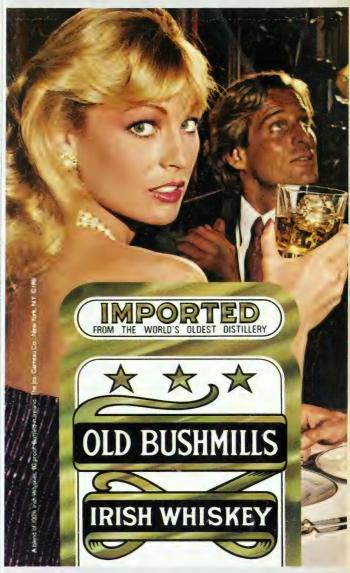
two men were pardoned because federal official should suffer punment for violating the Constitution the higher cause of "national seity," even if he took it upon himf to define national security. Here president supposedly determined curb bureaucracy defending buucratic caprice of the most pocally dangerous kind. Here is a sident whose faction condemns overnment snoopervision" conning unwarranted searches and zures forbidden by the Fourth nendment. For this apparent beval of principle, however, the rean is clear enough. Capitalism cant be liberated from its republican ains until the federal government liberated from the law. This is the st principle of the Reaganite

The corruption, incompetence, and alfeasance of federal bureaucrats. r example, have frequently been posed through the workings of the reedom of Information Act. The w has proved to be an effective eck on bureaucratic caprice and government snoopervision." In orer to weaken the law, Reagan's torney general and personal atrney, William French Smith, has wed to use the deep public purse the Justice Department to defend court any government official tryg to withhold information from inuisitive citizens. The public purse ill be used to protect the federal ureaucracy from the public.

Should a federal official come uner strong suspicion of criminal conuct, present law requires that a pecial prosecutor, not the Justice Department, be called in to handle the case.

The Reagan administration oposes the law on the patently aburd grounds that it is unconstituional for the federal government not o be able to investigate itself—this n a government of checks and balmees. The Reaganites oppose the opecial prosecutor because he can—and did—bring down a criminal administration. The Reaganite state is to be rendered immune to law enforcement and free to commit high primes and misdemeanors. Because the American Civil Liberties Union

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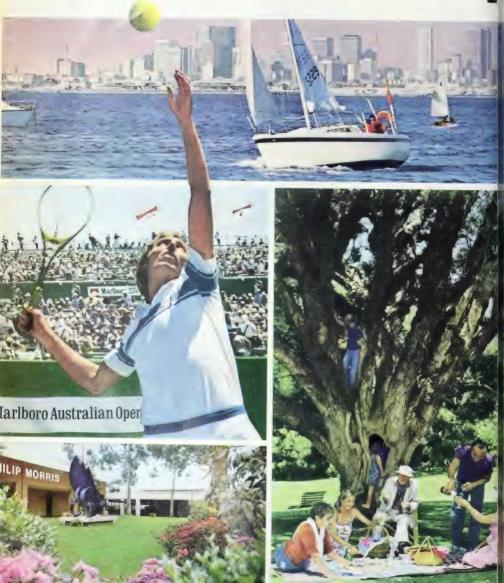


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# Melbourne's up



# pp, down under.

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The true delight, and distinction, of the Melburnian, however, is style. It is a style as elegant as the broad, tree-lined boulevards which bring light, air and spaciousness to the city center; as gracious as a formal picnic in one of the plush parks which cover a full fourth of the city's surface; and as unbuttoned and carefree as a ride on one of the gaily-painted electric trams decorated by some of the city's top artists.

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to to combat official lawlessness, the president's chief adviser, Edwin Meese, denounced it in a public address \*

Shortly after unveiling the "Program for Economic Recovery" the White House proposed creating what it called the "National Recipient Information System," a centralized "superfile" on 25 million Americans receiving public assistance of one sort or another. The alleged reason for this antirepublican proposal was that it would help officials detect interstate welfare cheats, an argument on a par with proposing a national police force in order to relocate stolen cars. The real purpose of the "superfile" is to rectify a glaring inequity in the federal power to harass political dissenters—the only adhesion to the principle of equality that the Reaganites have thus far demonstrated

The inequity is this: unlike the affluent, poor people are immune to political harassment via the Internal Revenue Service. The nuisance of repeated tax audits holds no terrors for those who use the short form, Under the National Recipient Information System any poor person the White House chooses to harry could be put through eligibility checks, the poor man's equivalent of a tax audit. The urgency of this new system of harassment is, of course, the expectation that turning the poor into a national mob will require special federal instruments.

REATING A capitalist state and sharpening a few instruments of political repression cannot alone stifle the free political life of the American people. They are necessary but scarcely sufficient. In this republic only one thing can give the government overwhelming power over the public life of the governed—the transformation of the republic into a nation armed. on the march, and bristling with bellicosity. That, too, is already a part of the National Renewal. The Reaganites propose a foreign policy so global in its reach, so vague in its ends, so militarized in its means, so well funded that it will make possible soon enough the massive mobilization of the country. Analysts of foreign policy do not regard the Reaganite alarums and excursions as a foreign policy at all. They are merely the continuation of domestic politics by other means.

Under national mobilization-"preparedness" was the old termthe president becomes the embodiment of the national mission, the high priest of "national security." which is a secret he need youchsafe to no one and a reason of state that can override any objection. This is repressive power indeed, but the Reaganites have given it a curious and revealing twist. In a speech at West Point, President Reagan told the assembled cadets that the army was "a chain holding back an evil force that would extinguish the light we've been tending for six thousand years." The "evil force" is of course the Soviet Union, whose "growing menace" to the United States, say the Reaganites, rests on the fact that it is either getting stronger or getting weaker. But what is "the light" we must guard by doubling the size of our monstrously wasteful military establishment? It is the light of monotheism. America must fight to make the world safe for the worship of One God. When Alexander Haig (who calls himself the president's "vicar") was asked to specify what "values" America shared with Argentina's military regime, he replied, "A belief in God."

The Reaganite state is not merely mobilized and bellicose, it is sup-

posed to partake of holiness. As t president told his Notre Dame a dience. American values are "root in the source of all real strength belief in a supreme being." In fac-America was founded by a "litt band of men" who were notably different to the claims of divinit This attempt to sanctify America-"this blessed land," this "industri giant"-has an important politic purpose behind it. It is Reagan's a tempt to resolve a profound contr diction, which might be described trying to meld into one president Woodrow Wilson and Calvin Co lidge, the president who worshiped the shrine of "service to humanity and the president who worshiped the door of large banks. For the pu pose of stifling the free political a tivity of the citizenry, the Reagan ites are calling for mobilization for monotheism. This requires of th American people an almost limi less credulousness about the claim and pretensions of the federal gov ernment, But National Renewal als requires that the citizens distrust an despise that selfsame government.

The contradiction is unpreceden ed in our history. The "Archange Woodrow," as Mencken used to cal him, was not trying to unshackl capitalism. Coolidge, who turned th Treasury Department over to th capitalists, did not have a large for eign policy. The administration's re ligious prattle is an effort to inser a third term between "big govern ment" and "small government"the holy nation. Without a majo war, and an uncommonly popula one at that, the attempt is utterly futile, because the holy nation is nonesuch. Whenever it acts it will be seen for what it is, the leading offi cials of the government beating peo ple down in the name of the Lord.

Such is the National Renewal tha the Reaganites have in mind for us I think they are going to fail. I be lieve they are going to fail badly It takes more than this gang of scal awags to subvert a republic that stil lives in the hearts of its people. The only question is: will they fail with a bang or will they depart with a whimper?

HARPER'S/OCTOBER 1981

<sup>\*</sup> According to a New York Times report of July 3, 1981, the Reaganites' fears of a special prosecutor are well founded. High Reagan appointees, noted the Times, are "officials who in previous administrations might have been ruled out by concern over possible lack of qualifications or conflict of interest, or open hostility to the mission of the agencies they now lead. . . . In regulatory agencies, most appointees are former employees or financial beneficiaries of the concerns whose activities they are supposed to police. But appointees to agencies that guard individual rights often have records . . . of proven opposition" to those rights. Since the failure to perform an official duty constitutes the crime of nonfeasance and since the failure to prevent or report such a crime constitutes the crime of misprision, the Reaganites understandably wish to regain the exclusive prerogative of investigating themselves



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#### **Harper's**

## What Do Women Want?

#### Feminism and its future

by Barbara Grizzuti Harrison



HEN THE Women's Liberation Movement began to be felt as a social force in the late 1960s, it was called exactly that—the Women's Liberation Movement. There

ras something fierce and flamboyant about hat, something heady and gallant, tough, enrgizing, and also something perhaps in the lest sense naïve, and something brave-newvorld as well, banners unfurled. It is no acident-it was not simply for the sake of brevty-that the name of the movement soon beame truncated: the women's movement, we ay, or, even more modestly, the feminist novement. When we say the "feminist movenent," we sound elegiac and muted: implict in those words is a recognition (in equal parts heartening and disheartening) that we are not so new, after all; we are tied to the past, part of a continuum—the struggle for women's rights was not born with us; trumpets have sounded before.

More to the point, the word "liberation" is a vexing one; it accommodates a host of meanings, and it cannot possibly mean the same thing to everyone who gives it utterance.

To be a female is not to be a lesser human being; women are fully human—on that ground all feminists (all responsible human beings) stand firm.

Having said that, we are obliged to recognize that nothing yields to simplicity. What does it mean to be "liberated"? Does it mean to part radically with all the forms of the past, all traditions? Do we want altogether to smash the family as we have known it? Do we mean to alter and reconstruct the family? (We certainly can't ignore the family.) Does to be liberated mean to rediscover and reenact (or to invent and enact) forms of religion peculiar to a matriarchal past, amazons and witches? (Was there ever a true matriarchy? Is matriarchy by definition superior to patriarchy?) Is our vision an egalitarian one? Will our desires be satisfied if women wrest corporate and political positions from men? Will we have achieved liberation when there is a full complement of women in the boardroom and in the war room?

Questions in the wake of questions: Can any woman be said to be liberated in a capitalist society? Is socialism a prerequisite for liberation...?

What do women want?

Who does the real work of the world? What is the real work of the world? If the real work of the world is that which extends into the future, that which is not ephemeral, and that which sustains life, we are talking about poetry and bread and babies, not (one supposes) about finance and guns.

Barbara Grizzuti Harrison is the author of
Visions of Glory: A
History and a Memory of Jehovah's Witnesses. Her most recent book is Off Center, a collection of
essays, recently issued
in paperback by Playboy Press.

#### Barbara Grizzuti Harrison WHAT DO WOMEN

WANT?

Can women play in the sandbox and in the corporate world? Should men be dividing their time between the sandbox and the corporate world? How? How, in the real world, does this work? Does being liberated mean doing it all—making babies (and love) and poetry, and forming social policy? Can we have it all? How? Is it right, fair, or reasonable to expect to have it all?

That "a woman has a right to control her own body" has become a cliché. While not exactly opposed in meaning to the words of the traditional marriage vows in *The Book of Common Prayer* ("with my body I thee worship"), the phrase encapsulates an entirely different world view. Does one world view have to be sacrificed to the other?

In talking about women's liberation, are we talking about a separatist culture? about romp-

constraint?

It may seem unfair to raise these questions at a time when the Supreme Court has made it easier to justify distinctions based on gender, and proponents of women's rights feel themselves to be more than ever beleaguered. But hard times demand hard questions.

ing androgynes free of all sexual restraint and

I wanted to see how a small part of the world addressed these questions. More than that, I wanted to understand on what assumptions a relatively small number of women—and their mentors—based their hopes and plans for the future. The part of the world I chose was Smith College. It is arguably unfair to use a small, private, elite institution as a microcosm of the women's movement. Nevertheless, the questions are being asked at Smith; and the assumptions that are being acted on tell us a great deal about the women's movement today—and about what is meant by "liberation."

W

OTHING THAT happened during the turbulent 1960s at Smith—the largest privately endowed liberal-arts college for women in America and one of the largest women's

colleges in the world—did much to disturb the image of that institution as a sheltered and genteel haven, an oasis of civility and cloistered scholarship. Smith functioned with every appearance of harmony: there were no sit-ins and few visible disruptions; there was no apparent rancor between students and faculty or between students and administrators. All normal college activities were suspended for four

days as a protest (such a polite protest against America's bombing of Cambodia: Thursday-night candlelight suppers and Fride afternoon teas continued to be held-as the had been for 106 years—during that decaded civil-rights protests, antiwar protests, and in dent uprisings. While students at other now eastern colleges and universities formed n tant caucuses and noisy alliances. Smith work skated on Paradise Pond (named by Jen Lind when she was in the area on her hon moon), continued to indulge their appet for eighteenth-century Spanish literature cranberry muffins, and made ritual pilgrima to Emily Dickinson's house in the neighboria town of Amherst, Smith, true to its tradition was ladvlike.

Smith is no longer quite so ladylike. A cobination of forces—a recessionary economy and the women's movement—has altered Smin ways both subtle and profound. There a still Friday-afternoon teas; but few people a shocked—and even fewer surprised—what they become the occasion for "lesbian won shops." There are still Thursday-night candlight suppers; but abortion rights, two-famingaychecks, "flexitime," child-care sharing, at the inducements of corporate recruiters are likely to be discussed as the merits of Amhermen and weekend "road tripping" to nearly

coeducational institutions.

Smith remains, on the surface, almost ove whelmingly polite—"civilized," faculty an students call it, with resignation, smugness, o bravado, depending on their temperaments an on the struggles in which they are embroiled But the last decade has wrought changes, i students' expectations of themselves, in their plans for the future, and in what students are being taught and the way in which they are being taught.

A case can be made that every importan social movement obliges pedagogues to tak a hard look at their teaching. This is certainly true of Smith: whether or not women's studies, like American studies, ought to be a separate department appears to have stirred up more controversy than the invasion of Cam

bodia.

The question, refined, is whether women's studies are a legitimate field of scholarship at all. The issue of tenure has become a thorny one, not unrelated to women's studies and the very definition of liberal arts: Smith has been charged with denying tenure on the basis of sex. According to feminist faculty members, male and female (none of whom will speak for attribution), one of the determinants of the decision to grant tenure is the degree of allegiance a scholar has to traditionalists who

gard women's studies as trendy, peripheral.

bjective, parochial.

Change can be measured in small ways, too. seven days on campus, not once did I see a oman wearing an engagement ring. (I say voman" deliberately: one calls a Smith stuent a girl only if one wishes to invite uneasantness.) "You'd have to wear mittens you owned an engagement ring," one young oman said. She was stitching a needlework impler for her Harvard lover at the time 'For you I pine"), at the Women's Resource enter, the hub of feminist activity on campus, here civility, once again, prevailed. She was ently ragged by other students, made to feel s if she were engaging in a mildly subversive ctivity, but, blushingly defiant, she stitched

And: "I'm so uninteresting," Serena, a reshman, said to me. "All I really care about Jane Austen." She said it self-deprecatingly, ut not without her own measure of defiance. 'rivilege-the right to pursue personal hapiness (and wisdom)—is something people re defensive about at Smith. The charge of litism has been leveled against the college so ften, students hardly know whether to feel jurdened, pleased, or abashed by their special place in society. Not infrequently, they manage to feel that they are all three at once.

And: the bulbs were in bloom at Smith's Botanical Gardens when I visited. Every day, Ann Shanahan, Smith's director of public relations, urged me to see them, but I never did. Nor did I find time to attend ecumenical services at Helen Hills Hills Chapel, where Smith women design the liturgy. This was an activity urged upon me by Dr. Jill Ker Conway, Smith's president, who thought it might make for a pleasant change of pace. Indeed, as delightful as I found most Smith women, I could have done with flowers and prayers after seven days of entertaining clamorous voices, voices that told me how the women's movement had or had not-affected their lives and their perceptions of themselves.

Valley, framed by the Holyoke mountains,

"'You'd have to wear mittens if vou owned an engagement ring,' one young woman said. She was stitching a needlework sampler for her Harvard lover at the time."



MITH COLLEGE is located eighty-five miles west of Boston, in Northampton, a town with a population of 30,000 that invariably calls to mind the adjective "charming." Pleasantly situated in the Connecticut River

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Northampton, with its eclectic mix of woodand-shingle early-Victorian houses, gothic masonry mansions, and chaste and severe Colonial architecture, looks sleepy—but is not.

In the center of town, on a side street abutting a parking lot, is a huge mural that gives some indication of organized women's activities in the Valley. Painted by the five-woman Hestia Art Collective on a wall of the New England Telephone and Telegraph building. the mural-busy, vivid, energetic-is a visual representation of the history of women in the Valley from Colonial to modern times: a woman field-worker harvests tobacco plants: a native American woman demonstrates the medicinal properties of herbs to a Colonial woman; directly below them (chronology, in an oddly exhilarating way, is made nonsense of), are women engaged in a family-planning session; contemporary women play volleyball; nineteenth-century women toil at the looms of the Northampton Woolen Manufacturing Company, cheek by jowl with women holding ERA signs, with suffragists, and with women protesting violence against women (TAKE BACK THE NIGHT, their signs read). The mural is executed in a self-consciously primitive style; it is vibrant with color, delightful. The gates to Smith College figure prominently in it, as does Sophia Smith, founder of the college.

Diagonal to the mural, which is a source of pride to every woman I spoke with, is a bookstore: Womon Fyre Books (Specializing in Wimmin's culture/Books by and about Wimmin in all fields). The bookstore serves as a gathering place for women who are strongly disposed to alter language to suit their politics or their sexual preference, which many of them consider to be the same thing. For reasons no one claims to understand, the area surrounding Northampton has become a gathering place for lesbian-separatist collectivists, and for self-declared radical feminists, among whom are Mary Daly (author of Beyond God the Father, and Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism) and Adrienne Rich.

It is a short drive from Womon Fyre to the chic boutiques that encircle the 125-acre Smith campus, but one feels as if one is in a different world. (The point at which these worlds intersect is part of the story of Smith today.)

The entire campus is an arboretum. Even on a gray, misty day, the quadrangle is inviting, both womblike and expansive. House loyalties are very strong. (Smith's 2,600 undergraduates live in forty-eight "houses.") Students eat in house dining rooms rather than in a central cafeteria. There are no plastic trays at Smith—the painted china may be cracked and faded, but it is pretty. Pretty, too, to see

young women flock to dining rooms in bat robes and slippers, looking rather other-worl ly—drowsy, perhaps from predinner naps, a still immersed in classroom concerns.

("When was the shah elected president Iran?" one bemused woman asked at dinne on the eye of a visit by George McGovern. must have looked startled. Smith, after all a highly competitive school, and to hear mopeople tell it, there are no limits to what "th Smith Woman" can do. "She's really ver smart," somebody else at table whispered "She knows everything there is to know about calinhs and stuff. She just hasn't read a news paper in three years." Someone asked th woman who knew all about calinhs whether she was going to hear George McGovern "George who?" she said. "Ouite right," an other student said, saluting her with her tea cup. "He didn't do nearly enough for repro ductive rights.")

Smith women are cosseted, but they are also, willy-nilly or by choice, embroiled in the ferment of a powerful social movement. And they are not isolated. Smith is part of a five college consortium: Amherst, Mount Holyoke Hampshire, and the University of Massachusetts are all within a fifteen-mile radius. Many teachers "float" among the five colleges, com



ring-for the benefit of the students and e another-the degree of feminist activity each. Smith students are both protected in gir own immediate environment and exposed the travails of neighboring institutions. id this probably accounts for the sense of sequilibrium one feels emanating from all rections. It probably accounts, as well, for and faculty-who ocked on the door of my guest room at unedictable hours of the day and night to give the "lowdown" on Smith, to talk to me out women's studies, to ask me how one ggled a career with marriage and children or to tell me that they had no doubt they uld have it all ... no real doubt ... well, rhaps a few doubts.

rself at my door one morning before break-

MALL COLLEGES tend to breed intense lovalty and intense criticism, even within one individual. I am thinking this while I listen to Julie, a sophomore who presents

me, and, without regard for my early-morning grogginess, delivers herself of an impassioned monologue. Julie is a Gold Key Guide, one of two hundred young women who escort visitors around campus.

"I love it," she says. "I haven't met anvone yet who isn't proud of being here. But it's really difficult to have a social life at Smith. The administration glosses over that. We've structured our whole lives on male approval. and there are no men. When I first came here, I missed boys an awful lot. I went to frat parties, which were a bad joke. None of those guys want solid, permanent relationships. I'd come back from the parties and think, What's wrong with me?

"Boys in high school were loyal to one another, and bosomy. I noticed that, Girls were gossipy and bitchy. And that's why Smith is wonderful, because we're learning how we feel about ourselves without having to compete with men. If I'd gone to a coed school, I'd

never be a whole person.

"In Lamont House, where I live, there used to be a lot of lesbian radicals. It was a wonderful house, no cliques and no 'road tripping,' and no feeling that women were inferior to men. I'm not a lesbian; but they raised my consciousness. But they didn't understand

"'When was the shah elected president of Iran?' one bemused woman asked at dinner on the eve of a visit by George McGovern."



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WHAT DO WOMEN WANT? my need to meet men. And then I realized, my God, for years I've been training myself to think that I need men around to make myself feel good. When I realized that I'd just been brainwashed, I didn't care that there were no men.

"If I meet someone tomorrow from Amherst who's wonderful, that's great. But I won't die if I don't. I want to get married and have kids very much, and I want to be a writer. But first I want to work for a world where nobody ever has to have an abortion. I want to get birth-right organizations established, you know, like day-care centers. Society doesn't make room for unwanted children, so women have to kill them. I hate that so much. I see abortion as a symptom of women's oppression. Gosh, I'm afraid to tell the feminists at the Women's Resource Center that I think that.

"Smith made me a feminist, but the college has refused to have a women's studies program—and I want a women's studies major. What Smith says is that being a woman here is seen ondary. What's first is your education. But we're being taught from a male point of view.

"Oh, but it's like a magic kingdom here. I just love it so much. A magic kingdom."

Jennifer, a sophomore, is a late-night visitor. We chat in a living room of Gillette Hall, a large house where I am ensconced in a prim but comfortable guest room. Jennifer, with whom I have talked earlier at the Women's Resource Center, wants to talk with me about the brochure Smith sends prospective applicants. She doesn't like it. She calls it "a lie." On the cover of the brochure is a picture of a spacious room, bow windows looking out on mountains and sky. In the foreground of the photograph is a wholesome-looking young woman with a stylish hairdo, wearing a casually elegant dress, reading an art book.

"That's my room at Tyler House," Jennifer says. "They yanked me and my roommate out of the room and put in the president of the Gold Key Guides because she looks like a perfect corporate type. A real 'Smithie.' Or what they'd like people to think Smithies are, feminine and corporate bound. When they took the photograph, they pulled down my Women's Resource Center posters and substituted a Monet poster and a Toulouse-Lautrec poster. I made a stink at the Publications Department, but they just fended me off with kindness-hostility clothed in gentility. My real protest was to put a copy of Praxis-a feminist newspaper-on the bookcase. I wanted that to show in the picture." In the photograph, Praxis is invisible to the naked eye.

Jennifer is one of only five students at Smith who have so far managed to steer their way through the appropriate advisers and comit. tees to win college approval for an "ing disciplinary" women's studies major It an enterprise that consumed almost a years' her time, and her success makes her sometha of an anomaly on campus. On the other half Serena, whose interest in Pablo Neruda Jane Austen exceeds her devotion to conte porary women's issues, also feels herself to anomalous, as does Julie, whose conviction especially concerning abortion, are idios cratic and unpopular. Perhaps this prival slippery feeling that one is painfully differ from one's neers is also an inevitable charteristic of undergraduate life. But the feeli is exaggerated when, as now, social change in the air, and everyone is obliged to defor herself in relation to the women's moveme



ILL KER CONWAY, Smith seventh president, and the first to be a woman, is not ing if not politic when stalks about the women movement. Implicit in when the stalks about the women movement.

she says is the idea that women aspire to ha it all—everything—and that if they are Smi women they are likely to get it. She holds a honors degree from the University of Sydne a doctorate from Harvard. Although she is fi too reticent to volunteer so frontal a statemen about her personal life, it is widely assume that Mrs. Conway and her husband, historia John Conway, take turns at high-prestige ap pointments. It is her turn now; her husban teaches Canadian studies at UMass.

We met in Mrs. Conway's office in Colleg Hall. The outer office, with its gothic archeleaded windows, rich Persian carpet, mirrolike oak floors, evokes images of a privat chapel in the house of an affluent Victoriar reminding one that Sophia Smith, the sole in heritor of a large fortune who founded the college in 1871, had in mind a "Christian education" for women:

"It is my opinion," her will stated, "tha by the higher and more thorough Christian education of women, what are called thei 'wrongs' will be redressed, their wages adjust ed, their weight of influence in reforming the evils of society will be greatly increased, at teachers, as writers, as mothers, as members of society, their power for good will be in calculably enlarged.... It is not my design to render my sex any the less feminine, but to develop as fully as may be the powers of womanhood, and furnish women with the

ans of usefulness, happiness and honor, now thheld from them.'

These words, bittersweet, redolent of an era en everyone believed in progress, were very uch on my mind when I spoke with Mrs. nway. I had yet to meet a student who ought of motherhood as a vocation, or one thought of teaching as a means of achievg either status or economic rewards. What ould Sophia Smith have thought of this genation of Smith students?

Mrs. Conway spoke to me from across a polhed conference table in her airy, uncluttered fice. I had to strain to hear her. She speaks ith long pauses punctuating considered, meaired sentences. Her hands clasp and unclasp the attitude of prayer, fingertips meeting. Her ght-brown hair is tightly curled; her features re delicate-large, slightly hyperthyroid green ves in a fine-boned patrician face. She looks fore ethereal than stereotypically feminine pictured jogging in the Smith brochure, she ooks as incongruous as a bishop on a skateoard), yet there is about this forty-sevenear-old woman an ineffable managerial aura. ittle wonder that she has been able to get noney and internships from IBM and Gulf Oil.

Except that Smith has no ties to institutionlized religion, "the mission of the college," Ars. Conway says, "has remained basically unhanged since Sophia Smith's day: to provide he very best liberal-arts education for an allemale student body, to educate leaders who will serve as spokeswomen for women's needs und issues nationally."

Have "women's needs" been articulated by

the women's movement? I ask.

"There were men and women doing great scholarship in this country and in Europe relating to the history of women-to social theory as it explains the behavior of gender groups -before the women's movement," she says. "The resurgence of feminism affects the interests of students, but I don't believe that the scholarly enterprise goes on because of it. The effect of the feminist movement on students has been to make it clearly acceptable to be identified with a women's college," she goes on to say. "It is now seen as dignified and strong to share in the lives of other women." (I am thinking of something a Smith alumna, class of 1959, told me: "When I went to Smith, friends who were at coed schools thought of my choice as one of extreme docility or as an act of belligerence. Whether they thought I was a 'lady' or a rebel, they all had the same question: How are you going to find a husband?")

"Feminism," Mrs. Conway says, "has changed students' goals-to what extent compared with the effects of inflation on the lives

of the American middle class I cannot say. The middle-class lifestyle is maintained today by a two-career family, and had that economic change not come along I'm less sure how strong the redefinition of students' goals would have been."

"'American studies are regarded as essential: women's studies are not."



ILL CONWAY talks of the students' "internalizing" strong and positive models of "femininity." The ratio of male to female faculty is sixtyforty in the senior ranks; in

the junior ranks it is fifty-fifty. She is quick to deny that feminists find it difficult to get tenure: "People are entitled to their own opinions, and one should be free to advocate any change in the curriculum. What is important is how one stacks up as a scholar. The college has had a long history of support for women in senior administrative positions, and of distinguished women deans. Although it has had male presidents, the chairman of the board has traditionally been a woman, reversing the pat-

tern of other women's colleges."

She does not view her own appointment as a victory for feminism: "I don't believe that sex was a precondition for the search, because the board saw equal numbers of female and male candidates." ("How better to damn the board!" a senior faculty member said when I repeated this remark to him. "The thing is, one doesn't know if Jill's truckling to them or if she's a consummate game player. Unspeakable even to think of having a male president at this point in history!" "Whatever happened to the idea that the best person for the jobmale or female-ought to get the job?" I asked, "The best person for the presidency of a woman's college is a female person," he said firmly, "to say nothing of the fact that the female heads of boards she spoke of were figureheads, nothing more.")

Mrs. Conway has her own agenda: "The college is seen by the corporate world as a resource for providing absolutely first-rate management trainees. That is true of the legal and financial world, as well. Women entering highly selective women's colleges score out as much less interested in service careers and much more interested in the high-status, highachieving careers. I'm not inclined to be overly sad about this. I'd like to see a higher proportion of males doing social work. Wha of some concern to me is that young women may be so hell-bent to succeed in one on the very highly pressured careers that the don't

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early find time for serving others."

This is all very well, except that there is nothing to indicate that men are flocking to the helping professions. And—in spite of her avowed concern for introducing women to a life of service—Mrs. Conway, as I am later to learn, is not urgently propelling women in that direction. She is pragnatic; whether or not she is shortsighted is arguable.

Only once did Mrs. Conway not have a ready response to a question. I asked her whether the reportedly large number of "women-identified women" in the Valley, and their claim to an exclusive culture, had any effect on the Smith population. She paused for what was, even for her, an extraordinarily long time, and said, falteringly: "I would say that there's the same proportion of people with homosexual orientation in the population here as there is in the society at large. I don't define it as a problem because I think it's a private and personal preference with which the college should have no prying concern ... Have you been to the Helen Hills Hills Chapel yet? It's very lovely . . ." This signaled an end to our conversation. Without knowing why, I asked Mrs. Conway if Gaudy Night, Dorothy Savers's mystery novel about a women's college at Oxford, was one of her favorite books. "Oh, yes," she said. "Yes, yes," beaming.

Well, of course. One could see the appeal, for Mrs. Conway, of the amiable and uncompromising dons about whom Sayers wrote, not one of whom placed personal loyalties above professional honor. Their sole allegiance was to fact; they enjoyed the narrow serenity of academic pursuits.

"That was a long time ago," Mrs. Conway said, "a very long time ago." She removed her glasses, on which her name is stamped in raised letters (one gets the feeling that Jill Conway leaves little to happenstance). "A long time ago... But quite lovely to think of, don't you agree?"

J

AM HAVING lunch at the Faculty Club with Philip Green, an advocate of women's studies programs, and with Catherine Portuges, a professor of comparative literature.

Cathy, who has taught at Śmith, is director of the women's studies program at the University of Massachusetts, and is also involved in the national task force for women's studies. In the last ten years, 350 women's studies programs have been established across the country. According to their proponents, the aimst these programs is to include the experients and achievements of women—traditionally seglected—in the teaching of subjects range from history and literature to economics adbiology.

"There's no argument against a wome studies program, as far as I can see, that is also valid against an American studies pgram," Phil says. "It's a totally arbitrary sloof the field. If you take history, governme sociology, literature, and the English languaseriously, you must address yourself to the American versions of them, and you should have to have a separate program to get you do that. It would be absurd to study parliametary government without studying the American Congress; why do you need an American Congress; why do you need an American politics? Nevertheless, American studies are regarded as essential; women's studies anot.

"We have a real problem here: I personly don't feel that there are any women in t canon of political theory; if you told me integrate my nineteenth- and twentieth-centu political theory course with women's studie I would be hard put to do it. I might assig John Stuart Mill's On the Subjection Women, but I wouldn't, and couldn't, assig anything by a woman. In Cathy's field, cor parative literature, that particular proble doesn't exist. Women's studies developed of fields in which there were women—Englis literature, for example."

Cathy: "Yes; but it's not only a questic of 'works by' women but ways of treatin women. That's part of the difficulty of makin the case for women's studies. Part of my jo is to go to departments and talk about ho they can integrate women's studies into the curriculum. I remember one botanist saying 'But plants? Plants don't have a sext! I sait 'That may be so, but it doesn't mean that yo can't be aware of the needs of women student not enough of whom feel they're capable of doing work in the sciences."

"Of course," Phil says, "it's fair to say tha since Jill Conway's been president, Smith ha moved away from its parochial, medieval viev of liberal arts. Jill's reached out to the business world. But Smith remains immobilize when it comes to breaking away from the disciplinary view of knowledge.

"Sometimes, I'm inclined to believe that power—a kind of power—resides more with the students than with the faculty. Students will ask their teachers if they can do a projec related to women in the context of the class this then shifts the locus of investigation, and

dens it for everyone's benefit.

"My own research has been changed by stunts' concerns. I wrote a book—The Pursuit Inequality—that began out of articles about ce, and then I felt obliged to widen that to ke in gender discrimination. The book is, as result, as much about women as it is about acks and minorities. The subject was in the r—you couldn't avoid it. People do find emselves changing their research as a result is the women's movement—and not just besuse of pressure. They simply get interested .. if they're not so defensive that they can't can new ideas. Amazing how things have be anged."

"Not enough," Cathy says.

N 1978, Smith solicited and received a \$350,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation for a research project called "Women and Social Change." In 1976, an idea or a research program on women had been

of the administration:

Nowhere in her will did Sophia Smith state that the educational excellence she had in mind would best be achieved by a curricular and scholarly emphasis on women....

The intellectual history of this College suggests quite powerfully that women's minds, like men's, are most apt to flourish when they are encouraged to range widely. ... It would be a mistake to suggest to students or to faculty members that any one set of research topics or techniques has a special place in the "unique responsibility" of the College.... No amount of ideological zeal can make research on women more significant than it already is as a legitimate field of scholarly interest. This kind of zeal ... can create a bias that tends to constrain the wide range of inquiry and freedom to dissent that we consider vital to an institution of higher learning....

The 1976 idea was then modified, and Jill Conway, who had originated it, also gave the 1978 proposal her full support. ("Jill," one of the women active in the project says, her tongue loosened by three Bloody Marys, "is perceived by the conservative faculty as a threat to Western civilization on this campus.") There are nine principal "investigators" involved in the Women and Social Change pro-

ject, who, with their sixteen undergraduate research assistants, function as a collective in summer workshops. I have lunch one day with four of them in a quiche-and-cider restaurant just off campus.

Donna Devine is researching the social history of Jerusalem's upper-class Palestinian Arabs between World War I and World War II. "When I started to look closely at women in this culture," she says, "everything else seemed superficial by comparison. I started forging new connections: it was no longer possible, for example, to look at the role of Islam in independence movements without looking at the social, political, and historical implication of purdah."

Marilyn Schuster is working on the problems of narrative in French fiction by contemporary women, from Colette to Monique Wittig. She is trying to discover "what is unique to women writers and what they are able to do that conventional narratives or male-dominated narratives are unable to do."

Marilyn believes that whatever distinguishes women's voices from men's is owing to biology—to a woman's experience of herself as a physical being. Susan Van Dyne, who is studying American women poets, believes, on the other hand, that these differences are socially derived and determined. This is a question that vexes most feminists.

When we ask what women want, we must



"Many women
echo the words
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ask this prior question: Are gender differences biologically or socially determined? And nothing like a consensus exists. Which is probably why many women echo the words of earlier feminists: never mind what women want: ask me what I want. In some quarters this is seen as a "retreat" from politics and a return to personal solutions.

The participants in the project-divided on key issues-take umbrage when they are seen as an undifferentiated mass: "I've had letters from my own department," Susan Van Dyne says, "expressing the fear that my work will be unthinking uncritical advocacy of women poets-that I will confuse intention with accomplishment, and make the mistake of assuming anything written by a woman is good. In other words, because I am-we are-nolitically committed to feminism, it is assumed that our zeal will pervert our judgment,"

"We're accused of being sloppy and of having no methodology because our work isn't rooted in one discipline," Martha Acklesberg says. (She is studying the anarchist collectives in Spain during the Civil War, especially women's roles in them.) "They think we're a consciousness-raising group because we share our ideas and papers. The idea of a support group -of people not jealously preserving their own academic turf-is alien to them."

"And leads," says Marilyn Schuster, "to people saying that our lectures and conferences are 'just like revival meetings, where you sit around and pay homage to your speaker.' Whereas, in fact, we've had fierce fights."

Susan Van Dyne says: "I'm happy to tell my classes that my criteria are subjective, and that I am presenting only one way of analyzing a problem. Students learn to love it. They understand that a passionate political commitment to feminism can coexist with a love for facts, even when the facts upset your theories. To be tentative is to be human.



ERENA, A FRESHMAN who is my daughter's friend and therefore mine, has invited me to dinner at her house. Martha Wilson. This greatly pleases public-relations di-

rector Ann Shanahan, who is afraid that I will spend an inordinate amount of time with special-interest groups, like the Lesbian Alliance, and that, as a consequence, the "typical" Smith student will elude me, though Ann herself is hard put to assemble a group that she would define as "typical."

Student elections are being held, Poster orange, blue, green, vellow-enliven Mar Wilson's chintz and mahogany expanses. erywhere there are signs advising students conserve electricity (a cause far more popul if one is to judge from the weight of par devoted to it, than El Salvador, disarmame or ERA). Graffiti in the public telephone boo reveals a fondly intimate knowledge of m anatomy. As I enter the house, I hear a wo an chanting, "I am madly in love ... madly He is wonderful ... wonderful ... "

Serena introduces me to Page Kelley, he resident of Martha Wilson, a senior who fur tions as liaison between students and dear Page says that in order to become head re ident, she had to reassure the administration that she had no "personal grudge" again lesbians, and that she could handle tension that might arise in a house where there w lesbian activity. The tensions arise from the fact that "heterosexuals worry that homose uals will scare men off. And they have don Lesbians have gotten hostile when men vi ited."

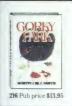
Fair-minded, Page says she understand the source of lesbians' hostility: "It's hard be homosexual in a heterosexual world. A tually, someone who plays a phonograph to loud is more trouble to me than a lesbian wh minds her own business." Page is looking fo ward to a workshop in which lesbians will di cuss the "political implications of homoses uality." ("What are the political implication of heterosexuality?" I ask. "Oh. I guess I'v never had to think about that," Page answer: "Should I?")

Because the women don't compete for me on campus, Smith promotes intense friend ships; in the view of many, emotional int macy, in turn, gets confused with sex. "I'r not sure people know what they're doing, says Meredith, a freshman. "I have to te myself to take it easy when I see display of affection between women." "The thing tha shocked me," Serena adds, "is that when saw . . . cuddling . . . I was shocked. I though I was so open-minded."

It is interesting how a minority population can become a major concern on campusmajor concern, but not the major concern Page and Serena's friends are much more con cerned with their Smith education than with homosexual activity. Kirsten, a freshman speaks for all the women when she says she is convinced Smith will uniquely prepare her for the executive position she expects to take: "My father, who's an insurance executive. says that women graduates are much more finished and polished and mature than men of

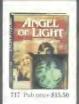
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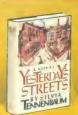
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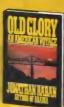
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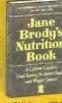
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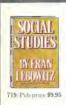
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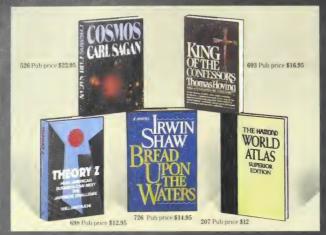
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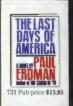
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same age. And Smith women are more ised and graceful—more classy—than oth-

college women."

All of these women expect to work. Some them expect to take time off to have chilen, others—somewhat naïvely, perhaps—ext that corporations will provide the flexible ork schedules that will enable them to be ves, mothers, and career women. All of them e, I think, a little scared that there may be gap between their expectations and reality. of all of them admit they're scared. Page 1958.

"I'm going through this horrible crisis right m," she says, "because I've been going out ith somebody for two years, and I love him. wouldn't be a problem if I didn't love him. would be very easy for me to get a job and ork in New York, where he works. But the ting is, I've passed the Foreign Service exam. Ind on top of that, I've had two years of Chiese here, and I've enrolled in a school in aiwan. I'd need to stay there for at least two ears to become fluent in the language. He oesn't want to give up his job; why should e? I could compromise and work for a bank r go to law school, but I don't want to.

"So right now my relationship with my oyfriend is just falling apart. We're hardly

peaking to each other.

"If I do pursue a career in the Foreign Serice, I would have to marry someone in the ervice and then worry all my life about geting transferred every two years, or I would have to marry somebody who would not mind being a 'househusband.' And, as much as I ike to think of myself as liberated, I'm not sure, since working is so important to me, that I could respect somebody who did the housework, or was my dependent.

"I love the idea of having children. Ask any woman in this house how much I like bossing people around and telling them how to run their lives. I'd enjoy taking care of

kids.

"A doctor in our infirmary here has the perfect situation: she gets up at six in the morning, dresses the children, gives them breakfast, plays with them for an hour, and then leaves home and arrives here by eight or nine. Then her husband plays with the kids till eleven, when the housekeeper comes in. At four the doctor comes home from work... something tells me I'm sounding silly."

Well, not silly, exactly. Listening to herself talk, Page almost immediately sees the problem: the situation she describes (which sounds, she admits, a little bit like musical chairs) takes enormous luck and discipline—and it takes money. Page falls back on an unexam-

ined cliché: "The quality of time you spend "We're not with children counts, not the quantity."

"No," says Kirsten, "it doesn't. My best friend's mother went off to work when she was in the first grade, and it was terrible to see how all the values of the family changed from affection and cooperation to an emphasis on monetary things: if you were going to the dentist you'd get two Matchbox cars or a doll or something. The house started working like a corporation. The mother was paying her family off." And yet Kirsten wants a career, preferably one with a corporation for which she can travel. She is visibly troubled by the sacrifices and compromises this may entail: "I don't want to think about it. I can't."

Not one of the women present did not think of children as a form of social security: "I get the feeling," Page says, "that a lot of women here who are interested in finance and corporate work are going to discover—and I'm afraid of it for myself—that they're going to be lonely. I really get depressed when I think about a future where I don't have some-

one to come home to."

All the women believed that by virtue of being Smith women, they could automatically accede to high-entry jobs when they graduated; they are, they say (as unself-consciously as possible), "leaders." ("Vassar's reputation dropped fifteen notches when it went coed.") "We're not going to have to fight our way to the top," Meredith says. "If a company wants a token woman, chances are it'll be a Smith woman."

Kirsten says: "Sometimes I get the feeling that everyone at Smith is telling us, Look what you've broken out of! Your mothers weren't considered good women unless they were wonderful mothers and kissed their kids and their husbands goodbye after a perfect breakfast and cleaned the whole house and had wonderful lunch waiting and then had wonderful lunch waiting and then had wonderful lore waiting. Now the message we're getting from Smith is that if you're not the head of a corporation, you're not a successful woman."

Page looks defiant. "Why can't we have it

all?"



REPORT FROM the Office of Career Development: in 1959, there were four Smith alumnae in teaching for every one in business; in 1979, there were four Smith alum-

nae in business for every one in teaching. In the class of 1960, 61 percent of all graduates "'We're not going to have to fight our way to the top. If a company wants a token woman, chances are it'll be a Smith woman."

Barbara Grizzuti
Harrison
WHAT DO
WOMEN
WANT?

said they wished to be homemakers; in the class of 1970, 15 percent said they would be homemakers. In the class of 1980, not even oper percent chose domesticity.

Nancy Steeper is a career and program counselor in the Office of Career Development. She is distressed: "A large number of students have mothers who have not worked. They're getting very mixed messages. Their parents are pushing hard: 'Choose! Find something out there in the world! Surely you'll be going on to law school?'

"All this at the same time as they admire the mother who stayed home. They want to have a family, and they want to have it the way she had it. Those who've thought hard enough about it know it's economically not feasible.

"I don't think there's any question that the women's movement has raised our sights and our opportunities. At the same time, it's putting us in a tremendous double bind. These young women feel they have to be superwomen, and there really isn't much for them to model themselves on. It's no accident that the magazine I see most around campus is Savvy [subtiled: The Magazine for the Executive Woman].

"When the head of the career development office came here from Radcliffe in 1972, her

task was to place people in jobs in educating and the social services. Now the emphasis land changed. The head of the career development office now oversees the on-campus recruiting program for corporations. She feels very keelly that that is her mission. We're talking veheavy banking, we're talking investment houses, we're talking IBM, Digital, Procter Gamble, marketing and sales positions.

"I have to tell you that I believe the woen's movement has failed us complete!
Whose interest does it serve for a visiona
feminist to present a fantasy of a world whe
people easily share responsibility for chi
rearing, where corporations are sensitive
these issues? It's just not happening in the re
world at all."

Nancy Steeper invites me to look at the March 1981 issue of *The New Current*, a college magazine. I see this cartoon: four your women stand in line outside the career divelopment office. They are dressed in various styles of attire—funky, preppy, casual, an punk. The same four women exit from the career development office. They are dresse exactly alike: all four are wearing three-piec business suits—the executive woman's unform.

I am thinking: Who among Smith's famou



mnae might serve as "role models"? It es without saying that nobody wants to emte Jean Harris, or, for that matter, Sylvia th. Gloria Steinem and Betty Friedan do t come equipped with husbands and chilm. Nancy Reagan won't do either; she is received by most students as having no life her own.

It is perhaps a paradox that one has to reach ther back in time—before the resurgence of minism—to find a woman who did manage have a husband, children, and a career: me Morrow Lindbergh. To the young, of urse, Anne Morrow Lindbergh is part of anom thistory; since people under thirty tend telescope time, Mrs. Lindbergh might have en a contemporary of Cleopatra. To say thing of the fact that economic circumances did not oblige her to work for a living. me can't imagine Anne Morrow Lindbergh lking about two-paycheck families.



AM SPENDING an evening at the Davis Student Center, with students from the Women's Resource Center and the Lesbian Alliance. (On this night, I like Davis—maybe

have had an overdose of good taste. I like ne molded day-glo hot-orange panels that line ne walls, the vending machines, the sound of Diana Ross record pounding in the backround, the thumping of a piano: "Heart and oul," a song I haven't heard since the Fifties.)

There is real reluctance on the part of many imith students who define themselves as femnists to ally themselves with the Women's lesource Center. They are afraid that if they lo so they will become identified as lesbians. The actual number of lesbians on campus is, of course, impossible to determine. Seventyive are associated with the Alliance; three imes as many women, from both the college and the local community, came to a lesbian lance held last year.

Some lesbians have contrived to create their own mini-environments at Smith: they live in two co-op houses, Hover and Tenney, which are small and, according to the lesbians, predominantly homosexual. The administration prefers to act as if this were not so; the lesbian women insist that it is so. Somebody is engaged in wishful thinking. Sorting fact from fiction, I draw rumors the way a magnet draws filings: one student, at an earlier meeting, made a point of telling me that Tyler House is a lesbian house. "How absurd," an

assistant dean says. "Tyler is full of theater students who keep erratic hours. Your informant was making a quantum leap from thespianism to lesbianism." And, in fact, my "informant" was confusing Tyler with Tenney.

"Bliss to live in a co-op," the lesbians say. "We have the best food—we cook our own, and do our own cleaning, too—and the best dinner-table conversations, and the best parties. And we have very little to do with the administration." (So far, they seem to be making a better case for their exclusivity than for their oppression.)

Allison, a junior, says, "The administration knows it has a lot to preserve and a lot to gain by minimizing and even hiding the lesbian presence on campus. Smith gets its money from the men that alumnae marry. We are ignored—which is a subtle form of oppression."

"How's this for oppression?" a young woman demands: "I wrote a paper on biblical criticism, and I attacked current interpretations of the Bible because they were misogynist—and I got a C+. I always get A's. So I went to the man. He said my criticism was defensive, and that I was trying to change the Bible. Imagine.

"And another time, I spoke up in class and said that the 'holes and slime' section of Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* was offensive and compromised his entire philosophy. I got no support from the other feminists in class. They were afraid of getting bad grades."

Of course it's impossible to evaluate these charges, although I see their point. It is difficult for me to believe, however, that they will ever find an environment less inhospitable than Smith. This makes me feel both glad for them and sad: the shocks they will encounter in what they call the real world are, I think, going to be far ruder than they expect.

While most of the women reject lesbian separatism as "static" and "unrealistic," some of the women see a separatist environment as the only one in which they will be able to flourish.

"There's a debate among separatists," one woman says, "about whether a male child who is over five years old can be admitted into a separatist collective." I am as chilled by this remark as they are amused by my asking them how they expect to have children at all if they refuse to consort with men.

"Why do you see that as a problem?"

"It would be if you regarded sex as an act of love," I say. Silence. "For that matter, it would be a problem even if you divorced sex from love, wouldn't it? If it isn't love, it's lust."

Laughter. Most of them seem to think

"There's a debate among separatists about whether a male child who is over five years old can be admitted into a separatist collective."

Barbara Grizzuti
Harrison
WHAT DO
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I am hopelessly old-fashioned-possibly Catholic?-because I make a distinction between lust and love. I admit to confusion: these women have made it very clear that they don't wish to be regarded as "breeders"; how will they regard the men who sow the seeds for their children? And what man would wish to be chosen for so peculiar a task? More laughter. The "obvious" solutions have escaped me: adoption, artificial insemination, and ... parthenogenesis. Parthenogenesis? Yes. "Mary Daly says male scientists conspire to keep information from us; we really don't need men at all," I have no trouble believing that Mary Daly has said this: in Gyn/Ecology, she talks about being able to have "nonverbal conversations" with animals, a privilege denied men.

"Mary Daly is gaga," a woman from the Resource Center says. She is knitting socks for

her lover (male).

"It takes a lot of imagination nowadays to find something besides going to graduate school, getting married, or going corporate," a senior says, "and those are options I entirely reject. My political commitment coincides completely with my personal aversion to marriage and corporations. So, maybe I'll travel across the country till I get to San Francisco—look into alternative educational systems, maybe, or alternative health-care systems."

One would-be separatist suggests to me that the perfect job is driving a bus—you can look straight ahead and avoid eye contact with men.

But most of the women in this room are no different from their peers in wishing to enter high-status professions, politics, and the corporate world. Berry, a junior, says she is "aiming at graduate school in business and planning to test out the corporate world—you know, work for a multinational or some hor-

rid thing like that. I know the argumen against it. I can understand it when my friem—most of whom are socialists or socialist-fer inists or whatever they call themselves—set to me, How can you be a capitalist and a t ken? But what I find myself doing is takir a look at what I can do that will leave me th most options five or ten years from now. It easy to talk about the patriarchal structur and how messed up it is; I want to experienc it. I want to see just what's wrong with it an then move away from it. Unless I do that, won't know what it is I really have to do. think the corporate structure will serve me it may help me to evolve."

One woman announces her intention to d "grass-roots organizing around feminist issue -abortion, in particular"; another is inter ested in a "career in films-documentarie about women's lives." Joy, a sophomore, is an athlete who wants, in some way, to change the National Collegiate Athletic Association, which is "very male-oriented and money-orientedthe NCAA will take over women's sports and just kill them." She seems-this is hardly un common among people who want to worl "outside the system"-to have a love-hate re lationship with money: "I'm convinced now that what my parents have always told me is true-without money you can do a lot on a small scale, but you really get dumped on. I just want to demolish football."

HE NOTION of separatist communities disturbs me profoundly. Utopianism dies hard; while the idea is durable, no exclusive sectarian community has endured the

test of time in America. Lesbian-separatist communities are a permutation of an idea that continues to excite the imagination to visions of a perfect world, and that continues, in practice, to fail. I can't forget the words I heard at Smith: "Once a male child is over five years old, it becomes questionable as to whether he should remain in the community."

I have come, with these words sounding discordantly in my head, to Jean Bethke Elshtain, professor of political science at UMass, who does little to soothe me. She tells me of a student who, after her divorce, began to associate exclusively with "women-identified women." After a few months in a lesbian commune, she declared she couldn't deal with a male child—her own. So she gave the child over to her ex-husband, whom she despised,



rfeiting her right ever to see him again. The tle boy was two and a half years old.

Jean Elshtain-who has taught at Smiths an arsenal of such stories: "Three or four ars ago I had a student in one of my courses 10 was very bright but obviously quite disrbed. Her papers were cogently argued, but ined by spurts of gratuitous, idiot rhetoric: reud was a cancer-ridden pig.' She finally d well in the course, after a lot of give and ke, and then she disappeared from campus r six months. She came into my office one ternoon, toward the end of the day; she id been crying, and she was holding a pupv in her arms. She'd been living in Northnpton, in a home with a group of women, ad the women had held a group meeting bout the puppy. It was the consensus that she ad to get rid of the puppy because it was iale, and nothing male was allowed in the ousehold. She was told that either the puppy ad to go or she had to go. Of course this is -I hope—an extreme example of separatist fe: still, it shows what the logical conseuences of a certain kind of thinking-if you an call it thinking-are. She asked for my dvice. I said, 'Keep the puppy and find a diferent place to live.' I don't know what beame of her; I never saw her again."

Jean points out that Western political hought, from Plato and Aristotle on, has been mbued with the notion that there are two ealms: the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom. "The realm of necessity—the daily enewal of life, which includes everything from washing the dishes to giving birth and caring for a senile aunt-was despised; it was the work of women and of slaves. The realm of freedom has, in practice, consisted of adult males contracting together to do politics, make policy. One of the major contributions of Christianity, with its emphasis on the goodness of the material world, was to enable us to understand that the 'despised' is sacred. The realm of necessity has its own dignity and its own integrity: it's the realm in which people live and die and find meaning.'

The trouble is, of course, that the profoundly revolutionary idea that the realm of necessity is sacred has been more honored in word than in deed. We still have adult males contracting to do what is considered the important work of the world. When feminists started arguing—frivolously, many of us thought—about who was going to wash the dishes and take out the garbage, they were, in part, and with justification, reacting against being excluded from the realm of freedom. But they were also, in part, refusing to accept the idea that no work that sustains human life is dirty

work. That is why one feminist at Smith was able to say that "both Mother Teresa of Calcutta and Dorothy Day are nothing but super housekeepers."

(A Marxist feminist from Smith tells Jean that to raise a child is to "reproduce a future commodity for the labor force." Jean says: "Is that why I'm scared when my son goes bike riding? Because capitalism may be losing a wage earner? Tell me another.")

When women at Smith talk of "flexitime," child-care sharing, and two-career families, they are talking about a new model for the family, one that would allow them to exist in the realm of necessity and in the realm of freedom. When lesbian separatists talk about communes in which men will have no part—or in which men will be so denatured as not to be recognizable as men at all—they are talking about dismantling the family, which they no longer see as a functioning unit.

Whether Smith women honor the family or wish to overthrow it, they are almost without exception in favor of abortion on demand, which is seen not as a terrible necessity but as an absolutely moral act. To say that "we have the absolute right to control our own bodies" is to express the wish for absolute freedom, and to deny that we live in relation to other people. I have trouble squaring their position on abortion with their position on ERA.

Many of the same women who believe absolutely in every woman's right to abort are not in favor of ERA or are to some extent ambivalent about it. This is due in part to ignorance: few women know its exact wording. It may also be a consequence of their being privileged women: they simply don't expect to be discriminated against. I keep thinking of one sentence I heard at Smith, and of the worlds of meaning it contains: "I want the right to an abortion if I need one; but I want men to open the door for me, too."

The women's movement originated the slogan "the personal is political." If that were altogether true, it would also be true that the political is (always) personal; and if that were true, it would be very nearly impossible to form friendships across gender, class, or race lines. Any slogan, no matter how resonant, is only a slogan, simplistic, and not expressive of layered, complex realities, of profound truths.

A Passage to India ends, as nobody needs to be reminded, with an Indian saying to a member of the Raj: we can be friends only when we are equals. And yet it was also Forster who said, "Only connect." Both sentiments can exist in one human heart. And if

"I want the right to an abortion if I need one; but I want men to open the door for me, too." Barbara Grizzuti Harrison WHAT DO WOMEN WANT?

no way is found to reconcile these apparently opposing ideas-muddle, waste, and tragedy.

OWARD THE END of my visit. I grow tired of "sexual politics" (hateful phrase). I retreat into the past.

In the Sophia Smith Collection. I come across this

passage from a diary written in 1786: "I almost wished for some memorable event to begin this little volume with, but my life flows in a smooth stream . . . tho insignificant as it is, me thinks I would not like to forget it all

together."

The life of this anonymous woman-births. deaths, marriage days-is neatly contained in one of the thousands of gray filing boxes in the Sophia Smith Collection, amassed by Margaret Storrs Grierson, college archivist from 1942 to 1965. The collection attracts scholars from all over the world who wish to do research on women and the labor movement. women and peace movements, birth control. property rights, suffrage. Manuscripts and photographs document the achievements, and celebrate the daily lives, of women famous and unknown. In happy hours at the Collection, I find myself moved by the letters, photographs, even recipes, of dead, ordinary women.

Once I bought an early-American jam cupboard from the Salvation Army. After my son had stripped it of seven layers of paint and peeled off the vellow newspapers that lined its pine shelves, we found written, in faded, spiderv letters: Peaches, Put Up June 1801; Plums, July, I felt as if I were entering a dead woman's life; to say that I felt a surge of love for her is not to exaggerate. (Love calls us back to the things of this world: peaches,

plums.)

I experience that same sense of linkage to the past (the thrill, not at all morbid, one sometimes feels in an old graveyard, which speaks eloquently of life as a continuum, and of death as a part of life) at the Sophia Smith Collection: leather-bound daguerrotypes held together by frayed ribbons, buttons from the early twentieth-century British suffrage movement, suffrage Valentine's Day cards, recipes written in fine copperplate, vellow ribbons of watered silk, "for the Amendment." Lovely, after hearing so many many words at Smith, to be able to touch, feel, hold the past in one's

An elaborate fold-out suffrage Valentine's Day card, hand-lettered and painted:

With wisdom, dauntless will, or gold o grace or just sheer grit. Some special part is yours to play So come and help us win the Day! For woman's sake oh don't Decline To be

A Suffrage Valentine

A suffrage postcard: "WOMAN should condemn MAN . . . rather condemn parents having trained their sons since the beginn of time, in the belief that MAN only is copetent to vote," (The terms of the dialect remain the same: Is MAN the enemy? Are the victims of societally imposed roles? W these questions ever be resolved? [Does it m ter? Silver thimbles marked VOTES FOR WO EN: silver hooks and eyes in packets mark UNITE! These things are real. 1)

In her diary, Clara Barton writes from G tysburg in a large, sprawling hand (she w by this time almost blind): "I wonder if solder [sic] ever does mend a bullet hole

his coat."

Shoulder to shoulder. English wom marched in freezing weather, calling for sufrage and a fifty-hour work week. They march from Carlisle to London: near Watling Street police trained fire hoses on them. I am readir an anonymous woman's account. It is phle matic, but underlined with the joy of colle tive action:

One shopkeeper was heard to remark with great surprise and credulity in her tone, "They looks guite respectable," ... Every now and then some man would raise his hat to us, as we marched past, and if only they could have realised how encouraging a simple action like that was to us, I am sure it might have happened oftener ... I was sorry to think that our visit to Oxford was over, but I had to keep reminding myself that we were not out for pleasure.

A handwritten cookbook, 1832: "To Mak a Bridal Cake." Recipes for Cream Flummery Quince Marmalade, Orange Wine. "A Side dish-Boil a calve's head until half-done, "Funeral Meats . . . "

I am not a scholar: I will never do research here. It does not take a scholar's appetite for facts to see the irony implicit in a 1919 poster EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK,

I leave the college with hope and sorrow so intimately braided I cannot tell them apart

And I leave asking myself the only ques tion that seems immediately answerable: not What do women want? but, What do I want most? (and Is it good? and Can I have it?) I know I cannot have it all. Nor can my daughter. Nor can my son. Nobody.

HARPER'S OCTOBER 1981

#### ARS POLITICA



### THE NICENESS FACTOR

Good guvism in America

by Florence Kir.

MERICA HAD BARELY become a country when Alexander Hamilton asked himself: "Am I a fool, a romantic Quixote, or is there a constitutional defect in the American mind?" There is now. Life in America is like life with the governess in The Turn of the Screw. There are some good days, but sooner or later something happens to set things off and we're all in the soup again.

If suicide notes can be said to possess nationality, surely the most American is the one left by historian Wilbur J. Cash: "I can't stand it anymore, and I don't even know what it is."

I do. According to the laws of logic, A is A, a thing cannot be other than itself, contradictions cannot exist, and parallel lines cannot meet. Except in America. The movement of Birnam Wood to Dunsinane is an everyday occurrence in the lumberyard of our national psyche. Contradictions haunt us. After a decade of touchy-feely encounter movements we are supposed to take pride in saying "I'm a very emotional person," yet the public stance we admire most, especially in politicians, is "grace under pressure." Which is right? The Wasp or the Latin ideal? The upper-class cool or the lower-class heat? American status seekers, who used to know exactly what to do, are now stymied.

Someone is always getting briefed or debriefed, but no one knows how to behave. The favorite piece of advice for someone in a tense situation is "Don't try to be a hero"; then the hostages are sprung and hundreds of editorials announce that at last America has the heroes she has been craying.

We are told that it is wicked to stereotype people; then we are called for jury duty and listen in amazement while the defense eliminates Episcopalians who went to college and the prosecution eliminates Catholics who we to trade school, until there is nobody left ecept twelve people who are incapable of uderstanding the case. That's the jury.

If, while waiting to be eliminated, we pathe time by reading a magazine, we can fir an article on the joys of fathering back-t back with a Camel eigarette "Where a Ma Belongs" ad showing a loner, his duffel babeside him, frantically pumping his way of town on a railroad handcar. He's smart get out while he can; discrimination being probabled on the grounds of race, color, cree national origin, sex, sexual orientation, political ideology, and age, smokers have become fair game.

The love-it-or-leave-it set will undoubtedl accuse me of being a communist after readin this. For their information, I am more conservative than all of them put together. I am royalist; I believe in absolute monarchy and the divine right of kings. I would rather livunder a capricious tyrant who says "Off with their heads!" than be nibbled to death by a bureaucratic duck.

I have thought several times of emigrating but the only countries in which I would care to live all have strict six-month quarantin laws, so I can't do it. Like Blaise Pascal, "the more I see of mankind, the more I prefer my dog."

#### The friendly misanthropes

WAS BUYING groceries at Gulpmart, the Friendly Store, when a woman slithered up to me at the frozen-food bin and whis pered, "I love you. Pass it on."

She had heard, she explained, about the chain letters of the Thirties and decided that

Florence King is the author of a forthcoming satire on feminism, When Sisterhood Was in Flower, to be published by Viking. Eighties needed a chain of love that would ch across America. "When you say it to a le kid, kiss 'em," she recommended. I modly declined.

I got in the checkout line where, still shaken, ccidentally gave the clerk a penny instead

a dime

"Trade you this for a dime!" she chirruped. I couldn't figure out what on earth she ant for a moment, then I realized that this sher friendly way of telling me I had made nistake. She was, I remembered, the same rk who invariably said, "What can I do you?" instead of "What can I do for you?" cause inverted wording is warmer.

I went home and turned on the TV. It was community-service show. The first guest was thanatologist who spoke on "How to Live th Death," followed by a psychologist enged in discovering new minority groups, to recommended that midgets be called "per-

ns of reduced stature."

Then came the public-service announceents. "Is someone you know starving him- or reelf? Anorexia nervosa CAN be cured if

OU help."

Followed by a paean to the environment by paper company, featuring a celestial chorus id the slogan THANK A TREE. A smiling little oman, captioning for the hearing-impaired, as enclosed in a lower-left-hand oval like a sterical genie in a bottle.

I wait for the day when somebody will sugest that the dead be called "nonviable Amer-

ans." It's only a matter of time.

America is the Newfoundland puppy of the orld. Our obsession with friendliness began hen the first settlers wondered, "Are the naves friendly?" and shortly found themselves oking at stoic Indian faces. The natives were itendly for the most part, at least at first, but acy didn't look it. Unsmiling faces have struck error in the American heart ever since.

Ask an American traveler what he thinks f a foreign country and he will reply, "The eople are friendly." The one country that he annot bestow this accolade on is that cradle of xenophobia, France. Americans are scared o death of the French. It is quite possible hat the French are responsible for our compulsive Good Guyism around the world. The astier the French get, the nicer we get. In any case, our dread of hostility is so great that it produces a strange form of treason in the American heart. Our desperation to believe that we are not hated personally makes us relax and grow secure whenever a terrorist with five o'clock shadow says, "It's the American government we hate, not the American people."

There are fewer and fewer foreign countries we can snuggle up to, but there's always Canada. When she rescued six of our hostages, our galumphing appreciation left Canadians reeling in shock. Now Algeria's in for it. Anybody who's nice to us can count on being Hallmarked to death.

Meanwhile, here at home, the hysteria builds. The Los Angeles police chief has urged his officers to adopt "a warm and cuddly approach" toward civilians to improve community relations. Our "friendly" banks are robbed constantly because we reject the notion that an ounce of fear is worth a pound of love; all one has to do to get past the security guard is be a member of the human race. The password is "Hi."

Women continue to get into trouble with strange men because they would rather be dead than aloof. Old people are so afraid of fitting

"America is the Newfoundland puppy of the world."



the crotchety stereotype of age that they are suckers for bunco schemes that would fail in any other country. Doctors formerly in general practice are now in "family practice," because it sounds warmer. And, incredibly, when a lad of seventeen hijacked a plane at Seattle-Tacoma Airport last summer, a crew member later stated in all seriousness that the how was "very cooperative, he's been almost

a model hijacker."

HY DO WE behave this way? Politicians are fond of saving that "our diversity is our strength." but in actual fact we are the only people in the world who can experience culture shock without leaving home. There are so many different kinds of people in America. with so many different boiling points, that we don't know how to fight with each other. The set piece that shapes and contains quarrels in homogeneous countries does not exist here. Frenchmen are experts on the precise gradations of the obligatory "espèce de," and Italians know exactly when to introduce the subject of their mothers' graves. But no American can be sure how or when another American will react, so we zap each other with friendliness to neutralize potentially dangerous situations

The aloof warmth that makes life so pleasant in socially confident countries is not available to Americans, so we are forced to leap feet-first into instant cloying intimacy whether we like it or not. French charwomen call each other "madame"; "gnädige Frau" makes old ladies easy to respect; and macho Englishmen long ago learned to express intrasex affection with "my dear Smith." But Americans have nothing to call each other by except first names. There is no way to get a stranger's attention without sounding servile ("ma'am," "sir"), and so, committed as we are to equality at any price, we insult him.

Friendliness is especially necessary to a people who live by the maxim, "the country is full of nuts." The chance victim and the innocent bystander have replaced the plucky newsboy and the whore with the heart of gold as the protagonists of American folklore. The paranoid American has no idea "who's out there," as he puts it; Charles Whitman is up on his tower and all's wrong with the world, so smile your way to safety. If you are cool to someone, he might tell the FBI lies about you, or send an anonymous letter to the IRS because he doesn't like your face, so be nice to everybody. Bridges of understanding are good, but walls of friendliness are better.

NE NIGHT while writing this cri e coeur, I decided to rest from my bors and listen to the radio. With drink in one hand, a cigarette in tother, and listening to Rossini, I tried to foget about America for a little while. But rbody can pull off that kind of coup. The mustopped and a voice thick with concern spot "Lung cancer is an equal opportunity decided."

The announcer launched into a history cigarette smoking, pointing out that who smoking was considered unladylike, most wor en did not indulge and therefore did not glung cancer, leading people to think that was a man's disease from which women we naturally immune. "But now," he continue happily, "women are catching up."

ease "

America, in itself a democratic disease, he become the land of the democratic diseas Our obsession with equality has gone so ha wire that we go to pieces when a disease di criminates. Read an article on any disease that is widespread and you will come acros. The Sentence: "Hepatitis [mononucleosi herpes, the clap] strikes Americans in all or cupations and at all income levels, without regard to sex or race."

American blood is so rich with equality that we have come to hate uniqueness of any kind even the most noble. By having a Tomb of the Unknowns, we really don't have an Unknown Soldier: more than one destroys the concept. In a fit of nostalgia, a reverent "66 Minutes" feature mourned the demise of the Orient Express without grasping the connection between its demise and our compulsion to level. Princess Dragomiroff needs Drawing Room A, and Drawing Room A needs Princess Dragomiroff.

We even condemn the unique hatred. I you hate, say, gays, it stands to reason tha you undoubtedly hate blacks, Jews, Chicanos Orientals, and Indians. To the American mind it is worse to hate one than to hate them all

Feminists cannot understand why the ERA has not been ratified by popular demand, since "polls show that a majority of Americans are for it." What the polls actually show is that most Americans would not dare answer no to any question that contains the word equality.

It was only to be expected that the Nobel Prize Sperm Bank should have triggered such Lear-like rage. Particularly upset was Mary McGrory, who suggested that breeding reliable home repairmen would benefit society far more. Her reason?

Forkmen do not hear unless you scream ut them, like police dogs who only respond o a certain high, piercing whistle. It is only when a certain level of frustration has been reached that he is able to judge the sincerity of the consumer and the persistence of his notion that the work may be done. He may oblige if he is persuaded that apoplexy or a lausuit is not far away.

She begs the question. The attitudes to ich she objects are the result of our eninement of equality: if everybody is and as everybody else, why should a plumber y attention to a syndicated columnist?

#### Rien que pour pisser

HE PARADOX of women's rights in any era is that egalitarianism, which admits the issue, is also the chief barrier to its fulfillment. Just as despots are e most enthusiastic patrons of the arts, only aristocracy is secure and eccentric enough produce the one kind of woman who can idge the psychological chasm between the xes: the socially impeccable bawd.

When Whig doyennes like Lady Melbourne ad Lady Oxford traded knee-slappers at the righton gaming tables, men and women felt omfortable together. Then along came Ameria, where no woman could be a Lady but here all women could be ladies. The result as the terminally middle-class woman who look up "niceness" as a weapon against the rontier, a means of holding the wilderness at ay and maintaining a semblance of civilization. Confronted by her unflagging niceness, he frontier man came to think of women as its social superiors, an attitude that persists oday in the American rapist's battle cry, 'You think you're too good for me, huh?"

Our niceness factor prohibits the sophistitated intersexual camaraderie enjoyed by the
French countess who explained, "Rien que
rour pisser," when she asked her male traveling companion—a stranger—to stop the coach
by the roadside. An American man would be
horrified by such blithe frankness; under his
veneer of trendy liberalism he would classify
her as a "dirty girl." Unlike the courtly
Frenchman, he would refuse to stop the vehicle
and would enjoy the countess's physical discomfort and social discomfiture. He could then
tell himself that she wasn't so high and mighty
after all; that she was, in fact, no better than
he.

At first glance, it would seem that we have solved this problem. The American woman is no longer nice, but it's an unniceness without élan. Instead, she has taken on what Henry James called "a certain vague moral dinginess." The more pronounced it is, the greater her chances of getting on the "Donahue" show, where everyone will tell her how brave and liberated she is for doing whatever stomach-turning thing she has done. She can do no wrong.

We save our criticism for men. Countless books and articles contain the sentence, "Men commit over 90 percent of all violent crimes," and go on to list murky statistical evidence of the male's apparently inborn evilness.

It is all an updated version of the Victorian hatred for men's "lower nature" and the corresponding reverence for women's moral superiority. There's only one catch: feminism put an end to woman as a creature of innate purity. Technically the sexes are now equal, or at least equally human. Yet men are still somehow worse.

The frontier is still with us. The sexes in America are engaged, not in a sex war, but in a class war.

#### America, the hagridden

NDER JIMMY CARTER America shed its last semblance of manly dignity and started playing Socrates to the world's Xanthippe. For the first time, open aspersions were cast on the masculinity of an American president, and hence on all American men. Pakistan's president, General Zia, advised Carter to "act like the president of a superpower" the way a man in a bar would tell another to stand up to his wife. Our own commentators took up the cudgels and, it would seem, turned to the listings under feminine in Roget to describe the Carter personality. George F. Will used "hysteria," "shrillness," and "frenzy." William Safire produced "unrestrained restraint," "self-flagellating," "unprecedented weakness," "acquiescing," and the ubiquitous "caving in." Jack Anderson used "wavering," "waffling," "rhetorical tsk-tsks," "pusillanimous," "obsequious," "hesitancy," "wishy-washy." Robert E. Thompson used all of the above, but outdid everybody after the election when he called Carter "the Mona Lisa."

Of all the words used in print and on the air, the most frequently heard was "impotent." The Iranian crisis was a crisis of American manhood, when everybody suddenly realized what had happened to masculinity in this country. The defeat of Jimmy Carter was less political than sexual, a revulsion against the feminine principle ascendant comparable to

"We have lost the masculine principle and nobody knows it better than foreign countries," Florence King
THE
NICENESS
FACTOR

what Lamartine called "the revolution of contempt" that occurred in France in 1848, when the Carter-like Louis Philippe was overthrown.

Louis Philippe called himself the "Citizen King." Abhorring symbols of power, he took down the fleur-de-lys from the Palais Royal and walked through the streets of Paris wearing a plain black suit to prove he was no better than anyone else. There was nothing of the man's man about him; he much preferred domesticity. Says historian Priscilla Robertson: "Louis Philippe was one of those kings who distinguish themselves by being good men, and in the nineteenth century that meant being good to his wife and children."

Everybody hates good men, especially women. They move us to lava flows of bitchiness, which explains Rosalyn Carter's mean mouth. The good man is the one who makes a woman scream, "Do something!" We have gotten rid of the good and timid Carter, but have we gotten rid of the feminine principle as-

cendant?

America shows no signs of relinquishing its gynecologist's-eve-view of life. The obsession with the family that grips Reagan-style Godand-Country conservatives is a feminine obsession. A true conservative operates on the masculine principle expressed in "I could not love thee, dear, so much, loved I not honour more." That would never play in America, where love conquers all, including the armed services. The pseudo-conservatives are so busy trying to Save the American Family they do not see that it is this same family that is destroying America. It is impossible to escape the word. Networks call themselves "the Channel 9 Family," advertisements tell us that products, when not being made for people, are made for families. Touted as our greatest strength, the American family is actually ultimate Balkanization of an already Balkarized country, the Bosnia-Herzegovina of a body politic.

We have lost the masculine principle anobody knows it better than foreign countrilike shrewish wives, they present us with mands for weapons and aid in the form "shopping lists"—surely the most reveal phrase in use today. In the Sixties, men we claimed to be nonviolent often played roubut even that is gone now; today's young n prefer the candlelight vigil, the classic sponse of Mother Machree.

Manhood is expressed in silly ways, such going out in the cold without a coat. The trefrom the White House to Blair House is favorite of hardy capons. Another way is let it be known that you go without slee Diplomatic or union negotiations invariableature an announcement that everyone if yolved "went twenty-five hours without sleen."

Try as we might to deny it, men do have need to live dangerously. Homosexuality h become the new French Foreign Legion, the only means men have of escaping the feminity of American life. In an era of women sexual rights, it is also the only way left have a normal male orgasm—i.e., a quick on

But the only completely masculine stand left to American men is a tragic and irrever ible one, open to the man who chooses "t advocate and condone violence"—against him self. Gary Gilmore and Jesse Bishop both de manded and got execution for their crime Both died bravely: Gilmore with stoicism an Bishop with jauntiness—classic male response to danger now condemned as sexist. Bea Geste is alive and well—but not for long—o Death Row.

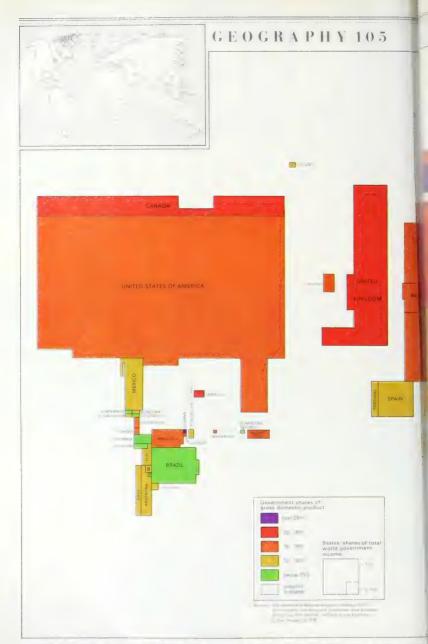
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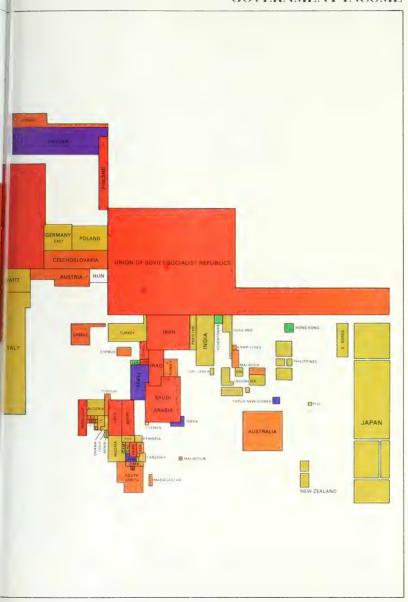


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### BEASTLY DEBATES

The dialectic of science

by Robert Silverber

HEN I WAS a boy my father often took me on Sundays to the American Museum of Natural History on Manhattan's Upper West Side -a journey of nearly an hour from our Brooklyn home, a lengthy subway ride for a sevenyear-old, made all the more interminable by anticipation of the wonders that lay ahead. Our visits to that vast Victorian pile of stone at the edge of Central Park had a ritual quality, for we always traveled immediately to the fourth floor-ignoring the temptations of the stuffed lions and gorillas in the lobby, the mounted game fishes, the hall of minerals, the colossal whale model that dangled between the second floor and the third—and headed

straight for the dinosaurs.

The dinosaurs! How they astounded me—
the stupendous brown bones of the brontosaurus, the imperial awesomeness of the tyrannosaurus, the formidable ponderous forehead
of the triceratops, the squat invulnerable bulk
of the stegosaurus! I ran from one to the other, feeling dwarfed but somehow not diminished; I stared in awe, I counted off paces, I
read the yellowing descriptive labels. After I
had had enough of the heavy items I sought
the subtler ones: the case that held a scrambled mass of disarticulated bones left exactly

as they had been found in the field, the diplay of fossilized trachodon hide, and the ske etons of such obscure creatures as moschop and palaeoscincus, my "special" fossils. Thei if time remained, we might go on into th rooms of fossil mammals, or to the hall of arcient man, or even downstairs to see the moun ed beasts of the African veldt; but the dinc saur halls received most of my attention.

It was the romance of dinosaurs that car tured me; I moved easily in imagination in humid world of tree ferns, giant dragonflies and monstrous, grotesque, ground-shakin beasts, but it would not have been nearly a appealing, I believe, to spend my adult lif among the fossil remains of the titans of m fantasies. Which means, I suppose, that my fascination with dinosaurs, however intense was a superficial one, for virtually all the pro fessional paleontologists whom I have me found their vocations in early childhood, awed and forever captured by the ancient beasts they saw in museums, whereas I, exposed to the same wonders, merely passed through the boneyard and on to other things.

How far I had drifted from my childhood preoccupation with dinosaurs became apparent in the spring of 1975, when I opened an is sue of Scientific American to an article called

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inosaur Renaissance," by one Robert T. cker. "The dinosaurs," an editorial blurb lared, "were not obsolescent reptiles but e a novel group of 'warm-blooded' animals. d the birds are their descendants." Dinors warm-blooded? My instant reaction was pticism bordering on outrage. Dinosaurs, er all, were reptiles, and reptiles are coldoded creatures, and what an absurdity to nk otherwise! Thus I trapped myself in a man's semantic confusions and unthinking umptions: for, as I read Bakker's article, ound myself astounded by the rigor of his nking and the logic of his arguments, and ealized there was no reason at all to assume tomatically that the equation dinosaurs = stiles = cold-blooded creatures had any vaity. Dinosaurs, to us, are mere aggregations bones; their fossil skeletons have indisputle reptilian affinities. But to generalize, from eletal resemblances, that there must have en an identity of metabolic processes beeen dinosaurs and modern reptiles is to say at there is an identity between dinosaurs and odern reptiles, which is manifestly not the se. Dinosaurs constitute a separate branch the family, perhaps quite a distant branch, d while it may be unlikely that they were arm-blooded, it is surely not inherently uninkable.

And so, jolted by this embarrassing exposure my uncritical unthought, I began to think out the dinosaurs and in particular to conder our ways of thinking about them. That d me into an exploration of the controversy er the warm-bloodedness of dinosaurs that ad already been going on for six or seven ears when I first stumbled on it, and is still iging furiously. Whether dinosaurs were or ere not warm-blooded is, of course, a matter f some interest in its own right. But a close ook at the controversy also tells us much about ne methods by which science progresses, and wites us to scrutinize concepts such as warmloodedness, the biological superiority of mamals, and the nature of scientific truth.

AKKER'S heretical thesis was actually nothing new. Indeed, I had been exposed to an early version of it long ago, and had forgotten; for in my ligrary is a small green book called Animals of the Past, by Frederic A. Lucas, published by the American Museum of Natural History in 1929. In a passage that I must have read fifty times in boyhood, Lucas wondered how dinosaurs, if they were as sluggish as today's reptiles, could ever have managed to gather enough food to keep their enormous bodies

functioning. Ultimately he fell back on the point that reptiles, precisely because they are sluggish cold-blooded creatures, need nowhere near the quantity of fuel required by mammals of the same mass. "Still," he added, "it is dangerous to lay down any hard and fast laws concerning animals... and in the present instance there is some reason, based on the arrangement of vertebrae and ribs, to suppose that the lungs of Dinosaurs were somewhat like those of birds, and that, as a corollary, their blood may have been better aërated and warmer than that of living reptiles."

Before we can examine the pedigree of the concept of the dinosaurs' metabolic uniqueness—a concept that goes back practically to the days of the earliest discoveries of dinosaur fossils-it is necessary to scrap the terms "warm-blooded" and "cold-blooded." Those are lay terms, a convenient ideational shorthand: cold-blooded animals (invertebrates, fishes, amphibians, and reptiles) have body temperatures that fluctuate in accordance with external climatic circumstances, whereas warmblooded creatures (mammals and birds) have automatic internal regulating mechanisms that maintain their body temperatures at approximately the same level, regardless of external conditions. The temperature of the blood is actually not significant; what matters is the presence or absence of internal temperatureregulation systems. An animal that generates most of its own body heat is known to biologists as an endotherm. One that depends for body heat on external sources is classed as an ectotherm. These correspond roughly to the terms "warm-blooded" and "cold-blooded," although, as we will see, the situation is not quite that simple.

Since the time of Aristotle endothermy has been considered a biological advantage. "The thicker and warmer the blood is, the more it makes for strength," Aristotle declared in his Parts of Animals. "Best of all are those animals whose blood is hot and also thick and clear; they stand well both for courage and for intelligence." The association of hot-blood-edness and courage is probably more metaphorical than real, but beyond question the most active, intelligent, and adaptable land animals on earth are the endothermic ones.

For all living creatures there is an optimum temperature at which the life processes are carried out. Extreme heat or cold slows those processes, and in great extremes can be injurious or fatal. An ectotherm—a lizard, say—becomes torpid as the air temperature drops, and below a certain critical level enters a state close to dormancy. When warmth returns, the lizard becomes alert and lively, but if the day

"Q.E.D., say the endothermic chauvinists: the race has gone to the hotblooded."



Robert Silverberg is a science and science fiction writer living in Oakland, California.

Robert Silverberg BEASTLY DEBATES grows too hot it is in peril of overheating. Thus much of an ectotherm's time is spent awaiting the return of sunlight or in hiding from excessive heat: it is vulnerable to the whims of the hour and is accordingly limited in its range and capabilities. Endotherms, however. equipped with effective internal furnaces, are relatively independent of outside climatic conditions. Their high-powered metabolism permits them far more strenuous functioning of heart, lungs, and muscle tissue than ectotherms can manage, and so they journey farther, pursue their prey or their fodder with greater diligence and energy (as they must, for their appetites are much more voracious than those of ectotherms), and adapt readily to unexpected changes in their environments. The empirical test of the superiority of the endothermic mode of life is the planetary dominance of the creatures that practice it. Amphibians and reptiles skulk in odd corners of the ecosphere, whereas the forests and meadows and deserts swarm with mammals and birds. Although for hundreds of millions of years it was the other way around, with reptiles and amphibians occupying most of the terrain and reptiles reigning in the air as well, nearly all of those creatures are extinct, having been replaced by more efficient organisms. O.E.D., say the endothermic chauvinists: the race has gone to the hot-blooded.

Yet the fact that endotherms were so long coming into their own begs some troublesome questions. The fossil record shows that the ancestors of mammals and the ancestors of dinosaurs were contemporaries. But over the next few hundred million years the endothermic creatures remained insignificant, despite all their presumed evolutionary advantages, while the ostensibly ectothermic early reptiles gave rise to the majestic dinosaurs, lords of the Mesozoic world and extant for 100 million years. Why? Why did mammalian dominance have to wait until the abrupt and mysterious extinction of the dinosaurs 65 million years ago? Was the primordial world so arranged that endothermy offered no adaptive superiority? Or—as the young turks of paleontology now insist-were the dinosaurs themselves en-

dothermic?

The saurian puzzle

HE DINOSAURS WERE a puzzle from the start. Though fossils of all sorts of strange beasts had turned up in Europe since Renaissance times, the first notable dinosaur finds were not made until 1822. The Reverend William Buckland, a ge-

ologist and mineralogist, unearthed in centr England the bones of a colossal creature th seemed distinctly reptilian—a sort of enc mous lizard—except for one anomaly: the teeth of modern lizards are fused to the jabone, but those of Buckland's animal we fixed in sockets, as are those of crocodile Despite this, Buckland named his fossil Meglosuurus. "giant lizard."

Almost at the same time came astoundir news out of southeast England: Gideon Matell, a physician and amateur naturalist, had discovered a Megalosaurus thighbone tootwice the circumference of Buckland's! Ar Mantell had found something else in the sam Mesozoic strata: gigantic teeth belonging a some other reptile. He named his discoven Iguanodon, "iguana tooth"—iguana teeth were perfect miniatures of the fossil ones—and becomparing the fossil teeth to those of the contemporary lizard he calculated that Iguanodo had been, if all else was in proportion, 75 that 100 feet long.

That these creatures were anatomically di ferent from modern reptiles in ways other that size was already dimly apparent; but it re mained for the British anatomist Richard Owe to show the extent of that difference. About 1840 he launched into a careful study of Meso zoic fossil reptiles. They had, he noted, a char acteristically reptilian pelvis-three pairs of bones solidly fused together-but also, an uniquely, they had five fused vertebrae joine to the pelvic girdle. This and their great size Owen wrote in 1842, "will, it is presumed, b deemed sufficient ground for establishing a dis tinct tribe or suborder of Saurian Reptiles for which I would propose the name of Dine sauria." That word came from the Gree deinos, "terrible," and sauros, "lizard," a though Owen did not intend to have his dinc saurs regarded literally as magnified lizards

Owen speculated boldly that dinosaurs mushave had four-chambered hearts, with twatria and two ventricles, such as birds an mammals have. Among amphibians and mos reptiles, the heart is three-chambered: twatria, one to receive oxygenated blood from the lungs and the other to receive deoxygenated blood from the body, and a ventricle iwhich both streams of blood are mixed to bumped forth again. But dinosaurs, Owen said must have needed a more "highly organised centre of circulation" to operate their vas bodies.

Yet he never said the dinosaurs were warm blooded. He saw them, rather, as an anom alous and enigmatic group, giant cold-blooder reptiles that combined familiar characteristic of lizards and crocodiles with certain mam



ian and even birdlike aspects that gave m, he said, "their superior adaptation to estrial life.

As dinosaur fossils continued to come from ground, Owen and later nineteenth-century tomists arrived at a deeper understanding their posture that intensified the mystery. omas Henry Huxley, biologist, paleontolst. and staunch advocate of Darwin's theof evolution (which Owen firmly opposed), impressed that the pelvic structure of diaurs was very much like that of birds; that tain three-toed fossil footprints found in the assic sandstone of Connecticut looked preely like bird tracks, albeit of phenomenal e; and that a newly discovered miniature iosaur, the chicken-sized Compsognathus of varia, seemed almost more birdlike than tilian. He concluded in 1868 that dinoirs, even the giant ones, had been more dlike in construction than any modern repes are, and deemed them an evolutionary ssing link, "intermediate between birds and otiles."

Thus even in the first decades of dinosaur search these creatures were thought to be ther more energetic and metabolically effient than any modern reptiles. Nevertheless, e skeletal structure of dinosaurs was plainly ptilian, and "warm-blooded reptile" seemed ch a contradiction in terms, such a biologal or at least semantic paradox, that no one riously proposed the notion that the dinours were endothermic. Besides, endothermy as not the only way of explaining how the nosaurs kept their internal furnaces stoked.

HE PRIMARY drawback to the ectothermic way of life is the metabolic shutdown that occurs when body temperature falls below the critical level. fodern reptiles lack the capacity for maintining a constant body temperature—the ate known as homeothermy—and are poikilthermic, with body temperatures that shift adically according to the temperature of their nvironment.

Yet reptiles have various partly effective rays of attaining thermal stability: huddling ogether against the cold, retreating to burows, or generating body heat by rhythmic nuscular contractions much like shivering. But these defenses distract the animal from he active business of earning its living. The nost effective means of coping with poikilohermic fluctuations is the thermal inertia that comes with large body mass. Large animals have greater heat-storage capacities than small ones, better fatty insulation, and lower metabolic requirements per unit of body weight or surface area; these tend to offset shortterm temperature fluctuations, especially if the

animal lives in a tropical area.

In the Mesozoic period, global climatic conditions were basically tropical most or all of the time. The nights were probably no more than eight or ten degrees cooler than the warm days-imposing no great stress on the dinosaurs. And those dinosaurs, in the main, were immense-great bulky things whose low surface-to-body-volume ratios made them ideal heat sinks in which to store enough of the warmth of the day to get them through the night without an important drop in body temperature. Thus, so the argument ran, dinosaurs were able to sustain high and reasonably constant metabolic function through heat retention alone, even though they lacked the internal heat-generating sources characteristic of "warm-blooded" creatures.

Until fairly recently there was no serious opposition to this position among paleontologists. During the latter half of the nineteenth century they were more concerned with discerning the physical structure of dinosaurs than with understanding their biology. Those were the great days of bone-hunting, when figures now legendary in their profession ranged the badlands in search of hidden wonders. But a shift of emphasis was inevitable, for it is impossible to divorce anatomy from biology; one cannot truly understand the bones without knowing the way of life of their former owner. Paleontologists are scholars as well as scientists-antiquarians of a sort, laboring toward an esthetic truth, toward the recapture of the image of a world forever lost. In that quest they eventually adopted a systems approach toward the vast fossil heap already recovered (much of it still not articulated, perhaps never to be, merely lying on shelves in university laboratories bone by bone by bone), and in the twentieth century they have sought not so much to find gaudy new titans to put on public display-although that still goes on -but rather to use the evidence they already have in order to discover the rhythms and boundaries of the incomprehensible lives of the strange vanished monsters.

But knowing that the dinosaurs were reptiles had a powerful prejudicial effect on even the paleontologists, despite the anomalies of their condition that had come to light. A consensus quickly emerged to the effect that, as Robert Bakker put it in 1968, "in the everyday details of life, dinosaurs were merely overgrown alligators or lizards. Crocodilians and lizards spend much of their time in inactivity, sunning themselves on a convenient

"One cannot understand the bones without knowing the way of life of their former owner."



Robert Silverberg BEASTLY DEBATES rock or log, and compared to modern mammals, most modern reptiles are slow and sluggish. Hence the usual reconstruction of a dinosaur such as *Brontosaurus* is as a mountain of scaly flesh which moved around only slowly and infrequently." A rigorous application of the scientific law of parsimony made it easier to think of the dinosaurs as reaching a sort of homeothermy through great bulk rather than having internal heat-regulation capabilities.

Conservative and traditional viewpoints have prevailed almost universally until recently. Those whose profession it is to think about the dinosaurs, who spend their working lives peering backward into that hallucinatory time when all the world was a set for a Hollywood spectacular, have had no serious reason to believe that dinosaurian bioenergetics differed significantly from those of crocodiles or tortoises. Many still feel that way today.

But into that quiet profession, populated largely by gentle scholars who fill their garages with bones in process of analysis and spend their holidays patiently chipping away at sandstone outcroppings in Utah or Wvoming, has come a full-scale brawl that has polarized the paleontological community like nothing since the epic clash of those two vociferous and egocentric fossil-hunting swashbucklers, Othniel Charles Marsh and Edward Drinker Cope, a hundred years ago. But while the Cope-Marsh feud was embellished with charges of theft of specimens and plagiarism of ideas, of incompetence and ignorance and chicanery, the present imbroglio has been relatively free of scandal (there has been some. but petty stuff not worth retelling) and has been fought not with loud ad hominem accusations but with the dry and dispassionate vocabulary of the scientific congress and the technical paper.

Revolt in the boneyard

HE FIRST MAJOR salvo came from John H. Ostrom, curator of vertebrate paleontology at Yale's Peabody Museum of Natural History, and one of the most respected men in his field. Ostrom, digging in Montana in 1964, had discovered a previously unknown dinosaur that he called Deinonychus, "terrible claw"—a mini-saurian, four feet high, eight or nine feet from snout to tip of tail, weighing perhaps 150 pounds in life. Three years of work led to a reconstruction of Deinonychus as a fierce, fast-moving carnivore that ran after its prey on powerful hind limbs and slaughtered it with savage slashes of its great curved talons. Such rapac-

ity. Ostrom reflected, is not what one now ly associates with cold-blooded creatures. predatory ones. This led him to contemplate of the other main dinosaur riddles, all relato the question of how, if dinosaurs were gish reptiles, they managed to provide the selves with sufficient food, to generate end energy to keep their own huge hodies move and even to pump blood from their heart brains that might be located twenty or the feet above. And, in particular, the upright ture of dinosaurs—a highly significant de nostic feature separating them anatomic from all other reptile branches-attracted trom's attention. In the modern world the animals that walk upright are endother ones, mammals and birds; contemporary tiles and amphibians are waddlers and spr ers. Why?

In 1969, at the first North American P ontological Convention in Chicago, Ostin delivered a paper that amounted to a call a radical reappraisal of dinosaur bioener ics. In so doing, he staked out a position himself on the dialectic battlefront, briefly tablishing himself as the leader of a new leontological revolution. Such a position dently was uncongenial to Ostrom, for he cold shortly be seen modifying and qualifying what amounted to a strategic retreat, stepping back from the front lines of what he la termed "a somewhat over-heated deball Perhaps by temperament he is a Kerent rather than a Lenin; but nevertheless he continued to place his considerable scient prestige behind the concept of the metabor ally active and endothermic dinosaur.

His topic at Chicago was, ostensibly, "Te restrial vertebrates as indicators of Mesoz climates." If dinosaurs were cold-blooded, the the era in which they lived must have be one of nearly worldwide equability. But the is an inherent circularity in this reasonia which no one before Ostrom had bothered examine: dinosaurs are useless as thermal dicators unless we have absolute knowled of their metabolic levels, and since his ccovery of Deinonychus, Ostrom was not all sure that the classical assumptions of sa rian ectothermy were valid. The erect postu of the dinosaurs held the key for him. Amo living animals there are some mammals the sprawl, but no ectotherms that walk fully right. Holding the body in an erect position Ostrom argued, calls for high energy expenture: "The correlation of high body te perature, ... high metabolism, and erect per ture and locomotion is not accidental," said. "The evidence indicates that erect po ture and locomotion probably are not possib



nout high metabolism and high uniform perature."

thout the same time Ostrom startled his eagues with this argument for endothermic osaurs, the anatomist and paleontologist and de Ricqlès, at the University of Paris, beginning to publish a series of papers t supplied a different sort of evidence for same conclusion. Changes take place in bone tissue of vertebrates as they age, qlès pointed out, and in birds and mamls these changes lead in adulthood to the dacement of juvenile bone with so-called ense Haversian bone," a kind of tissue rich h canals that facilitate the passage of calm from the blood to the skeleton.

Dense Haversian bone is not found in connporary reptiles and amphibians, with some nor exceptions, nor has it been observed in st fossil ones. But as early as 1957 two leontologists, D. H. Enlow and S. O. Brown, d identified it in dinosaurs. This led Enlow d Brown to suspect that the dinosaurs may ve been endotherms, and that conclusion is plicit in their study. Nowhere is it made plicit, however; at that time it was an innvenient paradox, impossible to integrate to the generally accepted picture of dinosaurs reptiles, and they let the point go by unamined. Beginning in 1968, though, Ricglès, ing advanced technology to scrutinize huneds of thin sections of dinosaur bone, exored the presence of dense Haversian tissue them and concluded that it "indicates rates bone/body fluid exchange at least close to ose of large, living mammals." From this it emed plausible to hypothesize "high levels metabolism, and hence probable endoiermy, among dinosaurs."

HE MOST spectacular assault on the assumptions about dinosaurs has come, however, from a former student of Ostrom's, Robert T. Bakker, now of ohns Hopkins University-who is certainly he Lenin of this revolution, and, in the minds f at least a few of his colleagues, the Stalin s well. In a field populated by outwardly taid and sedate individuals, Bakker cuts an outlandish figure, with long hair and a wardobe that runs mainly to frayed blue jeans. Though grudgingly respected by his peers, he s not widely liked, and there is considerable esentment within his profession of his antiauthoritarian and downright rebellious attiude. It is Bakker who has raised the debate over dinosaur metabolism from a scientific to philosophical one, bringing into it a broad ange of questions of evolutionary values, as

is apparent from the title of his first paper on the subject, published in 1968 in *Discovery*, the magazine of the Peabody Museum of Yale: "The Superiority of Dinosaurs."

Bakker was then only a few months beyond his undergraduate days, and his vision of vigorous, hard-galloping endothermic dinosaurs attracted nothing like the serious attention that Ostrom's Chicago paper obtained the following year. But in 1971 Bakker moved on to Harvard to do graduate work, and it was there that he first undertook the research most closely associated with his name: the calculation of saurian predator-prey ratios.

Among living carnivorous creatures, Bakker knew, ectothermic predators are far more efficient in converting their victims into body mass than are mammals and birds. Endotherms, their hyped-up interior furnaces running all the time, burn so much fuel merely to stay alive that relatively little of what they eat remains with them as new tissue, whereas ectotherms, slower of metabolic function, assimilate a far greater percentage of their food intake. Lions need to consume more than twelve times their own weight in meat each year; much smaller carnivores such as shrews, with proportionately much higher metabolic needs as a consequence of their size, require 100 times their weight; but a large predatory reptile like the Komodo dragon needs no more than three times its body weight in food a year. From this it follows readily enough that a community of predatory mammals must be surrounded by a far larger population of potential prey than a community of predatory reptiles of similar size; otherwise the more voracious mammals would shortly eat themselves into a state of famine. Presumably these relationships would be apparent in the supply of animal carcasses in any given region-the ratio of cheetah bones to gazelle bones, let us

Bakker's startling notion was to try to apply these concepts to fossil populations. He proposed to survey large aggregations of dinosaur bones, to separate the predators from the prey by examining teeth and jaws, and to calculate the probable body weight of each species in the sample; from this, after filtering for various sorts of bias that the peculiarities of the site might have introduced, he hoped to arrive at a ratio of eaters to eaten, expressed as a percentage. The results, which he offered in a group of papers throughout the 1970s, tended, he maintained, to confirm the thesis first stated in his 1968 article that "dinosaur energy budgets were like those of large mammals, not elephant-size lizards."

Among living mammals and birds the pred-

"The scientific dialectic is a process that must generally be carried out in plain view."



Robert Silverberg BEASTLY DEBATES ator-prev ratio, calculated in this fashion, ranges from one to three percent. Among ectothermic predators the ratio is about 40 percent. These relationships hold true whether one is considering weasels and mice, lions and zebras, spiders and flies, or Komodo dragons and pigs. Bakker, looking at his fossil samples. found that predator-prey ratios derived from assemblages of extinct mammals were not vastly different from contemporary ones-a mean of 3.36 percent-and the ratios for pre-Mesozoic reptiles ranged from 35 to 60 percent, very much the same as in living ectotherms. But among the mammal-like therapsid reptiles the ratios ran from 9 to 16 percent, -and for dinosaurs. Bakker found, they were from one to three percent, altogether comparable with the figures for mammals. To Bakker this was conclusive proof-along with Ricglès's bone-structure findings and Ostrom's arguments about upright posture-that the dinosaurs had been alert, fast-moving endotherms with the high energy needs that a physiology with internal-temperature-regulating capacity demands. And by 1975 he felt confident enough to move beyond the hermetic world of the professional paleontologists, offering his ideas in Scientific American, a magazine accessible to laymen but also serving a virtually unique role as an interdisciplinary iournal of current scientific belief. In that year also one of Bakker's Harvard colleagues, the British-born paleontologist and historian of science Adrian J. Desmond, published an elegantly argued book called The Hot-Blooded Dinosaurs that brought the whole issue into the public arena. Since then it has been hard for paleontologists to proceed with the normal flow of their work without first dealing with Bakker and his cohorts: for better or worse, this gadfly of the fossil realm has centered the attention of his entire profession on his obsessive belief in dinosaur endothermy.

Within the paleontological profession there are, by now, almost as many ideological positions as there are paleontologists. Ostrom, clearly sympathetic to the new ideas, nonetheless has written that although certain small bipedal dinosaurs may have been true endotherms, "personally, I doubt very much that all dinosaurs were endothermic." Ricglès, though he argues that dinosaurs were a coherent group, takes a comparatively moderate position: "It seems likely ... that the dinosaurs developed a thermal physiology that was uniquely their own. Operating between 'typical' reptilian and mammalian metabolic rates, large dinosaurs probably enjoyed at the very least incipient endothermy. . . . " Bakker agrees with Ricqlès that fundamental physiological

differences among the dinosaurs were im able, but he is far more positive about high and continuous levels of saurian production, and insists: "We need thermic dinosaurs: evolutionary theory mands them; the empirical data confirm they existed." Not so, says Nicholas Ho who speaks for the older school that refe the thermal stability provided by great mass and benevolent climate to explain anomalies of dinosaur metabolism. The resolutely anti-Bakkerian. Hotton at echoes Ricgles's notion that dinosaur phy ogy was probably something rather diffefrom that of modern mammals or rept "Alternative thermal strategies and life-s available to dinosaurs may well have bee exotic as their body form, the like of w no man has ever seen."

#### Cold looks at warm-bloodedr

HIS IS, of course, how science proce through a dialectical interaction produces constant reevaluation m revision of the plausible approx tions that laymen regard as "scientific trul Some of these "truths" are arrived at tively easily and are rarely subjected to ther scrutiny-that the substance we "water" is composed of hydrogen and oxyg for example, or that the half-life of radioacuranium-239 is 23.5 minutes. But when m deals with such matters as black holes, genesis of cancer cells, or the physiologies animals that have been extinct sixty-five lion years, one must take care not to regr present hypotheses as synonymous with solute truth. In all these matters the perceifacts are tested against probable explanation until a reasonably snug fit is attained, then further fitting proceeds indefinitely. scientific dialectic is a process that by its ture must generally be carried out in pl view, and in the view of the lay world as v as in the hieratic discourses of the specialis but that inevitably leads to distortion by p ular media, oversimplification, and sometime the replacement in the public mind of former hypothesis (previously popularly garded as gospel) by the new hypothesis (n regarded as acceptable substitute gosp when in fact neither is, in the view of specialist, anything more than an educa guess.

The discomfort that paleontologists for the issue of dinosaur physiology is parent when one turns to what is at the ment the primary archive of the dispute.





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Robert Silverberg BEASTLY DEBATES

thick and resolutely nonpopular volume entitled A Cold Look at the Warm-Blooded Dinosaurs. This book, edited by Roger D. K. Thomas and Everett C. Olson, is the outgrowth of a symposium held at the 1978 annual national meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, in Washington, D.C. It provides a splendid cross section of the current state of thinking about dinosaurs, as well as a graphic demonstration of the workings of the scientific dialectic. In a dozen papers the paleontologists, most of them critical of the hypotheses of Bakker. Ricglès, and Ostrom, have at one another. Ostrom and Ricglès are on hand, too, restating their basic ideas in a courteous way, and Bakker, who seems by far the most gifted writer in his profession, occupies 112 of the 463 pages with an exhaustive rebuttal of his critics. To the outsider, the most revealing statement is that of Ricglès, who bluntly declares that "the popularization of the current thinking and debates on this topic of a small. specialized research community has been, at best, untimely. Public controversy on such a popular subject is liable to foster lack of confidence in the methods of science, especially if the debate is carried on in journalistic rather than scientific terms. . . . The scientist has a social responsibility not to bring new ideas to this domain until they have been rigorously tested and become well established."

He has a point. It is premature to start revising the fourth-grade textbooks to describe the dinosaurs as warm-blooded. But there is no way, in this media-oriented age, for scientists to squabble in secrecy over so magical and fantasy-laden a subject as the dinosaurs. They are creatures of public myth, every scaly ton of them fascinating to us all, and—pace Ricqlès—we will continue to spy on the pale-ontologists in their deliberations, not so much, perhaps, for what we can learn at this stage about dinosaurs as for what we can learn about the procedures of science.

The AAAS symposium, at any rate, not only lets us look at the brawl but shows us what paleontology really is: not merely a matter of assembling bizarre old bones but rather part of a continuous spectrum of biological research whose goal is an understanding of how living things function. When Bakker draws predator-prey relationships from Serengeti National Park, or Jan J. Roth and E. Carol Roth examine the pineal systems of lizards to understand the mechanism of dinosaur heat-regulation, or Nicholas Hotton III draws up a table of body weight that runs from pygmy shrews to stegosaurs, we see attempts being made to link all of earth's beasts,

those here and those gone, into one gral rational continuum.

The rebuttals and counterrebuttals gene in the outsider first a healthy respect for spirit of scientific debate, then bewildermy and finally a numbed neutrality. Everyone turn sounds convincing. Bakker has employe Ricalès's findings to use dense Haversian by as evidence for dinosaurian endothermy. is attacked by M. Bouvier, who asserts some small mammals and birds lack s tissue while some turtles and crocodiles by it, thus suggesting that the correlation tween endothermy and dense Haversian be is not absolute, and that the presence of s tissue may be related to some other facsuch as body size, growth rate, or the no for increased mechanical strength, Rico whose position in the controversy is less rial than Bakker's, now mildly states that "Bouye is probably right in suggesting that Bak has oversimplified the argument, but she oversimplifies in implying that there is a correlation between Haversian replacement and overall thermal physiology. I regard to firm negative conclusion as being unwarran by the evidence." Bakker, who is given last word in everything in this symposium then proceeds to wipe out Bouvier and other of the bone-theory critics, B. K. McNa with his usual rhetorical confidence. He ch lenges unbelievers to look at Ricglès's splend microphotographs, dismisses the objections his critics, and concludes, "There can be ambiguity. The bone histology of dinosau and therapsids, down to a weight of 100 g. like that of mammals of the same size, all more complex than that of typical reptiles as amphibians." And so it goes.

UT OF THESE and scores of oth skirmishes, too technical to begin recount here, some larger issues beg to emerge. One is an attack on the whole concept of endothermy versus ect thermy. Examples are given of effective end thermy in bees and other insects, in fishes, ar even in the skunk cabbage. Roth and Rot declare that "the variety of thermoregulator adaptations employed by vertebrates is suc that a group of animals can no longer be sa isfactorily defined as being ectothermi homeothermic, or endothermic." Béland an Russell support this with an attack on th homeothermy of the elephant, stating that "th African elephant is apparently not strictl homeothermic, its body temperature showin a linear relationship with ambient tempe: ature." A semantic problem is apparent here



cientists are talking about different things the same names.

ven those who have no quarrel with the a notion of an ectothermy/endothermy otomy raise subversive questions about dea at least as old as Aristotle: the ased superiority of the endothermic way of Bakker has no doubt that high internal production is the secret of biological ess. He is careful to avoid, in our egalan era, any accusation of anti-ectotherm udice, of course: "My herpetological ads sometimes get the impression from arguments on the importance of endomy in biotic interactions that I think there mething disreputable or immoral in being entile with a low metabolic rate. It is not Extant reptiles and amphibians show an aordinary range of physiological adaptais which make the stereotyped bioenercs of advanced mammals seem rather unginative. Having a low resting metabolic provides a powerful advantage in many itats and habits, since low energy budgets uld permit greater specialization of food ice in time and space." Mammals and ds, he says, are wasteful, fighting the enonment by a constant outpouring of body it, whereas reptiles and amphibians, better dels for our frugal times, "substitute clever terns of posture, movement, microhabitat pice and cardiovascular responses to take vantage of the thermal diversity in the enonment." There is Jesuitical elegance and n simplicity in these arguments, but for me y are all negated when Bakker explains ewhere why, in the Mesozoic, the dinosaurs re ubiquitous and mighty and the mammals re insignificant: "One is forced to conclude at dinosaurs were competitively superior to immals as large land vertebrates. And that ould be baffling if dinosaurs were coldooded." Thus Bakker's studied praise of tothermy is revealed as a pro forma exerse, similar, perhaps, to praising blacks for eir natural sense of rhythm. Only when the mamic and splendid endothermic dinosaurs ho hogged all the large-animal ecological ches were extinct. Bakker says, could the ill development of mammalian evolution get nder way. Until then, the puny mammals ept out of the way, down there along with ogs, turtles, snakes, and other minor riffraff. This is, to some of Bakker's colleagues, latant endothermic chauvinism. There is no oubt that endothermic animals have been preading more widely over the earth in the ast sixty or seventy million years, and that ne mammalian species is the dominant animal n the planet at the moment, putting all others

to its service. But is the "success" of Homo sapiens and fellow endotherms the result of endothermy? The new modesty of the era of crestfallenness into which we seem to have entered has led some scientists to suggest that we have "succeeded" despite endothermy, not because of it, and that our interior heat production does not necessarily qualify us as the great biological shakes we think we are. As Olson and Thomas, the editors of the AAAS symposium, observe, "It is possible that in directly equating evolutionary success and a particular mode of thermal physiology we are answering the wrong question. It is easily assumed that birds and mammals have been successful primarily because they are endothermic homeotherms. However, should we not also consider the possibility that they were 'trapped' by adaptation in a physiological mode which, notwithstanding their obvious successes, has imposed significant constraints on their evolutionary potentials? Evolution is directed by natural selection, acting in particular historical circumstances. Reproductive success, not energetic efficiency, is the direct object of selection." Endothermy is energyintensive to a profligate degree, and, sub specie aeternitatis, may not be worth the cost, some of the symposium speakers imply. Crocodiles, turtles, cockroaches, and many other ectotherms have been around for hundreds of millions of years and still seem to be holding their own-anybody's definition of biological success. We endotherms may be merely passing through, in a flurry of metabolic frenzy, desperately consuming everything in sight in an attempt to pay the bills for our overheated physiologies. Is this superiority?

Such radical concerns do not play much part in Bakker's hypothesis. However kindly his feelings toward snakes and lizards, he quite clearly believes that endothermy is the best of all possible metabolic choices for a dominant life form, and that it was the fountainhead of the dinosaurs' global supremacy for the respectable hundred million years that they walked the earth. But their putative endothermy may somehow-for all its advantages—have been a factor in their extinction, that swift and thus far incomprehensible apocalyptic event of 65 million years ago. What wiped out the dinosaurs is a theme for its own fascinating speculations: the latest ingenious theory, emerging in various forms from various California laboratories, is that a cloud of cosmic debris caused by a volcanic eruption on the moon, or by the collision of a comet or an asteroid with the earth, blotted out most of the sun's warmth for a few years, eliminating all species unable to adapt to the sudden

"We endotherms may be merely passing through, in a flurry of metabolic frenzy."





Robert Silverberg BEASTLY DEBATES and violent change of climate. Bakker has remarked, "Although superior in direct biotic encounters with ectotherms, automatic endotherms are vulnerable to perturbations of the physical environment. Sudden, mass extinctions among large land tetrapods seem to be restricted to groups with mammal-like bone histology and low predator/prey ratios. The best-known mass extinction of vertebrates is the terminal Cretaceous event, which snuffed out the dinosaurs. Large crocodilians and turtles showed little or no response to this catastrophe."

What price endothermy then? Dinosaurs. like such basically tropical creatures of our world as elephants, rhinoceroses, and, for that matter, humans, had bare, uninsulated hides. In a suddenly colder climate they would, if warm-blooded, have radiated away their energy quickly through their bare skin. (Of course, cold-blooded animals would have faced the same problem, but Bakker would have us believe that the large ectotherms were somehow able to adapt to the situation that did the large endothermic saurians in. No large mammals existed in the Cretaceous, and the small ones survived the great extinction well enough.) Those who accept the traditional view of dinosaur physiology offer the argument from size, proposing that the great bulk that provided them with thermal stability when the world was warm could not be reheated once it had lost warmth under the changed conditions. But this does not explain why the smaller dinosaurs perished with the big ones, while lizards and alligators slipped through safely. Nor does Bakker's own reasoning account for the death of the smallest dinosaurs, which must have been similar in size and-he says-in physiology to the largest mammals of the time.

HESE ARE VEXED and vexing issues. Do any of them really matter, one wonders? Ricglès writes, "Some scientists, aside from being perturbed by the journalistic tenor of this debate, have asserted that it is pointless, since we do not and cannot know the answers, and because the question has no more significance than that relating to the sex of angels." Naturally he rejects this, arguing that "our understanding of the evolution of thermal physiology among fossil vertebrates has far reaching consequences for the study of comparative physiology, evolutionary biology and paleontology." Bakker is predictably even more passionate, declaring, "I believe that we cannot generate a rigorous theory about the long-term evolutionary processes which affect all large avertebrates without understanding dinosau

With these viewpoints there can be. I this no serious dispute. There are those in out of high places to whom all pure scient is frippery that impedes the real business of curing cancer, keeping the gas tanks II or improving yield per acre; but, aside fin the curious way that austere pure scient keeps turning up unexpected and lucra benefits of an applied kind, it seems to me necessary at this late date to offer a defeof research for its own sake. To comprehel the rings of Saturn, to measure the temps ature at the core of the earth, and to uno stand the metabolism of the dinosaurs characteristic goals of the restless, quest species that currently occupies the top ruof the evolutionary ladder. In knowing shape and structure of that ladder we my increase our knowledge of ourselves, and the who could challenge the merits of that amtion are. I suspect, operating in a unive of discourse too far from mine to be reach).

I have no idea whether Bakker's revisiona views of dinosaur life are valid-though find them intellectually appealing-nor dell know whether they will ever be proven or deproven, insofar as such things are possib But it has been refreshing to be a spectate as the dispute unfolds, and I think the co batants themselves are finding the fray still ulating. The polarization in the field seep to be a matter of age and temperament much as anything else, with the younger and more volatile paleontologists sympathetic Bakker, the older ones somewhat uneasy, an the majority in the middle offering caref scrutiny of the new ideas. Certainly, the r cent popular notion that dinosaurs have a ready been proven to be warm-blooded dangerously incorrect; certainly, the naïv equation of dinosaurs and modern col blooded reptiles is in need of modification and certainly it will be a long while before anyone will be able to offer even tentative conclusions on the whole subject. As the cor troversy proceeds, as the constructing of char and graphs and the weighing of data goes or the familiar process of regression to the mea seems to be setting in, with few scientists no willing to hold extreme positions at either end, As Rob Long, a University of Californi paleontologist, expressed it in a conversatio with me last spring, "People are pulling bac from Bakker—not in the direction of cold bloodedness but in the direction of doubt. I think this is a good thing. Doubt-unendin analysis, probing, testing-is the fuel that keeps science aglow.



HARPER'S OCTOBER 1981

#### MIND'S EYE THE

by David Suter

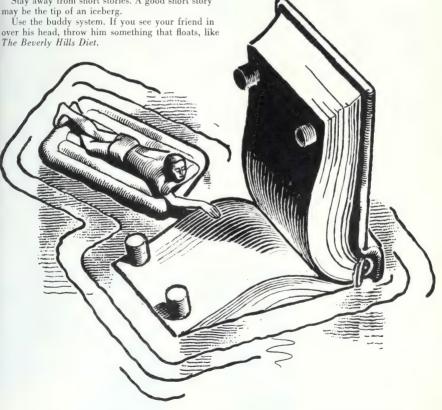
#### **Vacation Reading Safety Tips**

Every year thousands of people are incapacitated in vacation reading accidents. Here are a few pointers to make your holiday a safe one:

Don't read on a full stomach; wait at least half

an hour before plunging into Garp.

Stay away from short stories. A good short story



# THE ART OF MOVING PICTURES

Man, Superman, and myth

by Bruno Bettelh

HETHER we like it or not—and many may disagree with my thesis because painting, or music, or some other art is more important to them—the art of the moving image is the only art truly of our time, whether it is in the form of the film or television. The moving picture is our universal art, which comprises all others, literature and acting, stage design and music, dance and the beauty of nature, and, most of all, the use of light and of color.

It is always about us, because the medium is truly part of the message and the medium of the moving image is uniquely modern. Everybody can understand it, as everyone once understood religious art in church. And as people used to go to church on Sundays (and still do), so the majority today go to the movies on weekends. But while in the past most went to church only on some days, now everybody watches moving images every day.

All age groups watch moving pictures, and they watch them for many more hours than people have ever spent in churches. Children and adults watch them separately or together; in many ways and for many people, it is the only experience common to parents and children. It is the only art today that appeals to all social and economic classes, in short, that appeals to everybody, as did religious art in times past. The moving picture is thus by far the most popular art of our time, and it is also the most authentically American of arts.

Bruno Bettelheim, the psychologist and educator, is the author of Children of the Dream and many other books. HEN I speak here of the moving picture as the authentic American art of our time, I do not think of art with a capital A, nor of "high" art. Putting art on a pedestal robs it of its vitality. When the great medieval and Renaissance cathedrals were erected, and decorated outside and in with art, these were popular works, that meant something to everybody.

Some were great works of art, others not, but every piece was significant and all took pride in each of them. Some gain their spiritual experience from the masterniece. but many more gain it from the mediocre works that express the same vision as the masterpiece but in a more accessible form. This is as true for church music or the church itself as for paintings and sculptures. This diversity of art objects achieves a unity, and differences in quality are important, provided they all represent, each in its own way, the overarching vision and experience of a larger, important cosmos. Such a vision confers meaning and dignits our existence, and is what forms essence of art.

So among the worst detrimen the healthy development of the of the moving image are effort. aesthetes and critics to isolate art of film from popular movies television. Nothing could be n contrary to the true spirit of Whenever art was vital, it was ways equally popular with the nary man and the most refined son. Had Greek drama and commeant nothing to most citizens. majority of the population we not have sat all day long entranon hard stone slabs, watching events on the stage; nor would entire population have conferprizes on the winning dramatist. medieval pageants and mystery pla out of which modern drama gw were popular entertainments, as we the plays of Shakespeare, Michel gelo's David stood at the most pl lic place in Florence, embodying people's vision that tyranny must overthrown, while it also related



religious vision, as it represente myth of David and Goliath. vbody admired the statue; it was itaneously popular and great art. me did not think of it in such rate terms. Neither should we. ive well we need both: visions lift us up, and entertainment is down to earth, provided both and entertainment, each in its rent form and way, are embodiis of the same visions of man. rt does not speak to all of us. mon men and elites alike, it fails ddress itself to that true humanhat is common to all of us. A rent art for the elites and anothne for average man tears society t: it offends what we most need: ons that bind us together in mon experiences that make life th living.

HEN I SPEAK of an affirmation of man, I do not mean the presentation of fake images of as wonderfully pleasant. Life is t celebrated in the form of a batagainst its inequities, of struggles, lignity in defeat, of the greatness liscovering oneself and the other. Juite a few moving pictures have veyed such visions. In Kagemu-, the great beauty of the historl costumes, the cloak-and-dagger ry with its beguiling Oriental tings, the stately proceedings, the zeantry of marching and fighting nies, the magnificent rendering of ture, the consummate acting-all se entrance us and convince us of correctness of the vision here: greatness of the most ordinary men. The hero, a petty thief who ens impostor, grows before our es into greatness, although it costs m his life. The story takes place in steenth-century Japan, but the hero of all times and places: he accepts destiny into which he is projected chance and turns a false existence to a real one. At the end, only beuse he wants to be true to his new If, he sacrifices his life and thus thieves the acme of suffering and uman greatness. Nobody wants him do so. Nobody but he will ever now that he did it. Nobody but the

audience observes it. He does it only for himself; it has no consequences whatsoever for anybody or anything else. He does it out of conviction; this is his greatness. Life that permits the lowest of men to achieve such dignity is life worth living, even if in the end it defeats him, as it will defeat all who are mortal.

Two other films, very different, render parallel visions that celebrate life, a celebration in which we, as viewers, vicariously participate although we are saddened by the hero's defeat. The first was known in the United States by its English name, The Last Laugh, although its original title, The Last Man, was more appropriate. It is the story of the doorman of a hotel who is demoted to cleaning washrooms. The other movie is Patton. In one of these films the hero stands on the lowest rung of society and existence; in the other, he is on society's highest level. In both pictures we are led to admire a man's struggle to discover who he really is, for, in doing so, he achieves tragic greatness. These three films, as do many others, affirm man and life, and so inspire in us visions that can sustain us.

Y CHOICE of these three films out of many is arbitrary. What I want to illustrate is their celebration age in which self-discovery may exact the highest possible price. Only through incorporating such visions can we achieve satisfaction with our own life, defeat and transcend existential despair.

What our society suffers from most today is the absence of consensus about what it and life in it ought to be. Such consensus cannot be gained from society's present stage, or from fantasies about what it ought to be. For that the present is too close and too diversified, and the future too uncertain, to make believable claims about it. A consensus in the present hence can be achieved only through a shared understanding of the past, as Homer's epics informed those who lived centuries later what it meant to be Greek, and by what

images and ideals they were to live their lives and organize their societies.

Most societies derive consensus from a long history, a language all their own, a common religion, common ancestry. The myths by which they live are based on all of these. But the United States is a country of immigrants, coming from a great variety of nations. Lately, it has been emphasized that an asocial, narcissistic personality has become characteristic of Americans, and that it is this type of personality that makes for the malaise, because it prevents us from achieving a consensus that would counteract a tendency to withdraw into private worlds. In his study of narcissism, Christopher Lasch says that modern man, "tortured by self-consciousness, turns to new cults and therapies not to free himself of his personal obsessions but to find meaning and purpose in life, to find something to live for." There is widespread distress because national morale has declined, and we have lost an earlier sense of national vision and purpose.

litical beliefs, as are found in totalitarian societies, our culture is one of great individual differences, at least in principle and in theory. But this leads to disunity, even chaos. Americans believe in the value of diversity, but just because ours is a society based on individual diversity, it needs consensus about some overarching ideas more than societies based on the uniform origin of their citizens. Hence, if we are to have consensus, it must be based on a myth-a vision-about a common experience, a conquest that made us Americans, as the myth about the conquest of Troy formed the Greeks. Only a common myth can offer relief from the fear that life is without meaning or purpose. Myths permit us to examine our place in the world by comparing it to a shared idea. Myths are shared fantasies that form the tie that binds the individual to other members of his group. Such myths help to ward off feelings of

isolation, guilt, anxiety, and pur-

poselessness-in short, they combat

Contrary to rigid religions or po-

isolation and anomie.

We used to have a night that bound us together; in The American Adam, R. W. B. Lew summarizes the myth by which Americans used to live:

God decided to give man another chance by opening up a new world across the sea. Practically vacant, this glorious land had almost inexhaustible natural resources. Many people came to this new world. They were people of special energy, self-reliance, intuitive intelligence, and purity of heart. It is nation's special mission in the world would be to serve as the moral guide for all other nations.

THE MOVIES used to transmit this myth, particularly the westerns, which presented the challenge of bringing civilization to places where before there was none. The same movies also suggested the danger of that chaos; the wagon train symbolized the community men must form on such a perilous journey into the untamed wilderness, which in turn became a symbol for all that is untamed within ourselves. Thus the western gave us a vision of the need for cooperation and civilization, because without it man would perish. Another symbol often used in these westerns was the railroad, which formed the link between wilderness and civilization. The railroad was the symbol of man's role as civilizer.

Robert Warshow delineates in The Immediate Experience how the hero of the western—the gunfighter—symbolizes man's potential: to become either an outlaw or a sheriff. In the latter role, the gunfighter was the hero of the past, and his opening of the West was our mythos, our equivalent of the Trojan War. Like all such heroes, the sheriff experienced victories and defeats, but, through these experiences, he grew wiser and learned to accept the limitations that civilization imposes.

This was a wonderful vision of man—or the United States—in the New World; it was a myth by which one could live and grow, and it served as a consensus about what it

meant to be an American, But although most of us continue to enjoy this myth, by now it has lost most of its vitality. We have become too aware of the destruction of nature and of the American Indian-part of the reality of opening the West-to be able to savor this myth fully; and just as important, it is based on an open frontier that no longer exists. But the nostalgic infatuation with the western suggests how much we are in need of a myth about the past that cannot be invalidated by the realities of today. We want to share a vision, one that would enlighten us about what it means to be an American today, so that we can be proud not only of our heritage but also of the world we are building together.

NFORTUNATELY, we have no such myth, nor, by extension, any that reflects what is involved in growing up. The child, like the society, needs such myths to provide him with ideas of what difficulties are involved in maturation. Fairy tales used to fill this need, and they would still do so, if we would take them seriously. But sugar-sweet movies of the Disney variety fail to take seriously the world of the child-the immense problems with which the child has to struggle as he grows up, to make himself free from the bonds that tie him to his parents, and to test his own strength. Instead of helping the child, who wants to understand the difficulties ahead, these shows talk down to him, insult his intelligence, and lower his aspirations.

While most of the popular shows for children fall short of what the child needs most, others at least provide him with some of the fantasies that relieve pressing anxieties, and this is the reason for their popularity. Superman, Wonder Woman, and the Bionic Woman stimulate the child's fantasies about being strong and invulnerable, and this offers some relief from being overwhelmed by the powerful adults who control his existence. The Incredible Hulk affords a confrontation with destructive anger. Watching the Hulk on

one of his rampages permits carious experience of anger wind having to feel guilty about it on ious about the consequences, between the Hulk attacks only bad permanent of the feel of the hulk attacks only bad permanent of the feel of the hulk attacks only bad permanent of the feel of the hulk attacks only bad permanent of the feel of the hulk attacks only bad permanent of the hulk attacks of the hulk attacks only bad permanent of the hulk attacks on the h

Science-fiction movies can as myths about the future and give us some assurance abou Whether the film is 2001 or Wars, such movies tell about ress that will expand man's poand his experiences beyond anything now believed possible, while the sure us that all these advances not obliterate man or life as we know it. Thus one great any about the future-that it will le no place for us as we now are allayed by such myths. They promise that even in the most disa future, and despite the progress will have occurred in the mater world, man's basic concerns will the same, and the struggle of g against evil-the central moral pill lem of our time-will not have its importance

Past and future are the lasting mensions of our lives; the presis but a fleeting moment. So the visions about the future also cont our past; in Star Wars, battles fought around issues that also in tivated man in the past. There good reason that Yoda appears George Lucas's film: he is but a incarnation of the teddy bear of fancy, to which we turn for solar and the Yedi Knight is the wise d man, or the helpful animal, of the fairy tale, the promise from our de tant past that we shall be able to r to meet the most difficult tasks l can present us with. Thus, any sion about the future is really bas on visions of the past, because that all we can know for certain.

As our religious myths about the future never went beyond Judgme Day, so our modern myths about the future cannot go beyond the sear for life's deeper meaning. The reson is that only as long as the choice between good and evil remains man paramount moral problem does life.

in that special dignity that des from our ability to choose been the two. A world in which this lict has been permanently reed eliminates man as we know . It might be a universe peopled ingels, but it has no place for man.

HAT Americans need most is a consensus that includes the idea of individual freedom, vell as acceptance of the plurality ethnic backgrounds and religious iefs inherent in the population. h consensus must rest on convicis about moral values and the vaty of overarching ideas. Art can this because a basic ingredient of aesthetic experience is that it ds together diverse elements. But y the ruling art of a period is apt provide such unity: for the Greeks, was classical art; for the British, zabethan art; for the many petty rman states, it was their classical

. Today, for the United States, it s to be the moving picture, the stral art of our time, because no ier art experience is so open and cessible to everyone.

The moving picture is a visual art, sed on sight. Speaking to our vion, it ought to provide us with the sions enabling us to live the good e; it ought to give us insight into irselves. About a hundred years o, Tolstoy wrote, "Art is a human tivity having for its purpose the ansmission to others of the highest id best feelings to which men have sen." Later, Robert Frost defined petry as "beginning in delight and iding in wisdom." Thus it might e said that the state of the art of te moving image can be assessed y the degree to which it meets the lythopoetic task of giving us myths litable to live by in our time-viions that transmit to us the highest nd best feelings to which men have isen-and by how well the moving mages give us that delight which eads to wisdom. Let us hope that he art of the moving image, this nest authentic American art, will oon meet the challenge of becomng truly the great art of our age.

HARPER'S/OCTOBER 1981

# We have nothing to fear of technology but fear itself.

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# PLATO IN VERMONT

The ideal tree, and how to count it

by Hugh Ker

OW MANY trees are growing at this moment in the state of Vermont is a perfectly unanswerable question, and the easiest way of seeing that it is unanswerable is to ask how one might count them all "at this moment." For the job would take huge teams of foresters months, in the course of which many seedlings would be trampled into nonexistence while other slim stems would have pushed up through the ground; and now and then, sometimes before the census takers passed and sometimes after-at times even before their eves-a huge oak would crash down dead. (Or nearly dead: at what moment does a tree die?)

So there is no way we can hope to answer this simple question-have we even, for that matter, maps of Vermont so reliable we can be sure our crews aren't including trees from New Hampshire?-and the next thing the philosopher may want to know is whether, since we can't answer it, we can say that it has an answer. Does that number exist somewhere, merely inaccessible to our skill at discovering it? The incau-tious answer is "yes"; there is surely a number corresponding to a census of the-trees-in-Vermont-at-thismoment, notwithstanding that we can never find out what it is.

The incautious answer is Platonist: somewhere truths exist to be discovered, or perhaps never to be discovered; but at any rate, they exist. Some have existed since the world

began, like the elliptic shape of the planetary orbits, true (surely?) when men were painting deer on the walls of caves though unsuspected by any human mind until about 1619 (the mind was Kepler's).

Start a Platonist talking and he grows incautious. There are even truths, he will soon be insisting, that were true before the ages, that do not depend on even so primordial a "given" as the existence of the heavenly bodies. Such, he will tell you, are the mathematical truths. as that the angle in any semicircle is a right angle, or that 1 + 2 = 3. Very many such truths have been discovered. Many more still remain. And discovering them is the work of mathematicians, on the subsidizing of whom the federal government spent \$130 million in 1977 alone: by congressional convention an investment in such useful resources as ballistic knowledge, but in fact a lavish

and honorable subvention of the detailine ideal domain

UT THAT is just heady By contrast, in The Man matical Experience\* Phil Davis and Reuben Hersh play the mathematician's work "mostly a tangle of guesswork, a ogy, wishful thinking and frus tion," in which "proof, far from s ing the core of discovery, is me often than not a way of making sp that our minds are not played tricks." This sentence is the work their introducer, Professor Gian-(; lo Rota of MIT, who also shrew asks what Senator Proxmire wo say about such an account. All the public millions for such a mudd

Yes, since there's no other very mathematics gets done. As to we kind of thing it is that gets done such means, Davis and Hersh he you comprehend that too, in cribite-sized chapters that let you par for ingestion, and also let you put aside without serious loss any more you find tough.

A new kind of popular book is rare as a new smile, and since remerous signs, not least the Rubi's Cube and last year's Pulitzer Prie for Doug Hofstadter's Gödel, Esche, Bach, portend a new order of poular interest in beautifully useles abstraction, The Mathematical Eperience, of which my copy is third printing within a few month may itself portend a public ready move beyond several other sorts math books: the pocket circuses the

\* Birkhäuser, \$24.

Some have existed since the world Hugh Kenner is the author of, among many other books, Geodesic Math and How to Use It.

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fy with Googols,\* Martin Gardcollections of puzzles and cuies, the anecdotal histories (Gait twenty, scribbling his arcane for posterity the night before atal duel; Fermat's margin too to contain a tantalizing proof generations of workers have not structed), the self-teachers that e us we were long ago clumsily it, and the brisk prim works dismiss our inability to balance exbook, the better to set us up n extension course.

ind kinds of books all, these in to earlier stages of enlighten. Minds mysteriously move, and January's announcement that tadter would be phased in as ner's successor at Scientific rican was itself a portent of Though Martin Gardner is the living popularizer of mathematlore, Hofstadter's more rigorous est in conceptual topics presups that which the 1980s have umably in good supply, readers a fair capacity to ponder abtion. That's a powerful sign.

AVIS AND HERSH let their exposition converge on three main sorts of abstraction, each personified by a hutype. These are: Platonism, the umption we've already glanced at, mathematical truths inhere in order of things, rather like the iber of trees in Vermont, and nly wait for someone to discover m: Constructivism, the belief that hs come into existence only as a construct them, out of intuited nents like the natural numbers: I Formalism, the hollow assertion t there are no truths, simply inm positions in a game of axiom I procedure. (The position on a sshoard after move 27 was ared at by obeisance to law, but it esn't mean anything.)

Political analogies would be: (1) posing that Law tries to incarnate Googol, 1 followed by 100 zeroes, a y big number; the Googolplex, with Googol zeroes, is even bigger: from sner and Newman's believe-it-or-not thematics and the Imagination, a sursing seller in 1940 and as readable as

er today.

eternal Justice; (2) regarding Law as an evolving human construct; (3) saying that Law is a strict game for sharp wits. A lawyer I once knew fought a traffic ticket on the ground that since the law said a car shouldn't do so-and-so it was outside the law's bounds to penalize the driver. That man was a legal Formalist. The (Constructivist?) court disagreed.

Formalism took over mathematics almost within living memory, after several crises had destroyed the ageold belief that common sense would suffice. Everyone had supposedand why not?-that what mathematicians did was describe, in their compact symbolism, the world we live in. Euclid's geometry had simply studied the properties of our familiar three-dimensional space. A geometrician who got stuck could look around him for hints, and a geometry that didn't correspond with "experience" was unthinkable. But a century and a half ago Riemann and Lobachevsky devised two separate and equally legal non-Euclidean geometries wherein parallel lines behaved wondrously (Einstein would later have a use for one of them). Their achievement seemed to show that the house of reason was somehow independent of the world of experience, and needed its foundations checked for naïveté.

By the turn of the twentieth century Bertrand Russell and Alfred North Whitehead were busy erecting a new arithmetic upon piles driven by logic; 363 pages into their Principia Mathematica, they were able to claim that no future Riemann or Lobachevsky would ever disprove 1+1=2. Alas, by 1931 Kurt Gödel, in a tour de force unmatched since Aristotle, had shown that no system can ever prove its own consistency, and what mathematicians chose to do about that (short of suicide) became a matter of temperament.

Most, say our authors, manage a schizoid existence; they are Platonists to soothe themselves ("truth awaits my discovery") but something else when challenged, because Platonism seems embarrassing to defend. This upper-level chaos sets the scene for "Confessions of a Prep School Math Teacher," a man with

an M.A. (math) who chairs the department "in a fine private school in New England" and also coaches baseball.

"In answer to the question whether mathematics is discovered or invented, he answered with a snap, 'There's not much difference between the two. Why waste time trying to figure it out? The thing that is important is that doing math is fun. That's what I try to put across to the kids'

"When pressed harder on the question, he said, 'Well, I think it's discovered." (At last ditch, yes, a Platonist.)

What was the purpose, he was asked, of using computers?

"'No one in high school asks "why." It's there. It's fun.'

"'Is programming a form of mathematics?'

"'No. Programming is thinking. It's not math."

(Think about that. Math isn't thinking?) And finally:

"'How would you sum it all up?'
"'... What I try to do is sell math
to the kids on the basis that it's fun.
In this way I get through the week.'"

OW TO teach (sell?) this notoriously obdurate subject has occupied many dedicated writers, from W. W. Sawyer, whose numerous softcover books\* should help anyone keep high-school classes active on some other principle than getting through the week, to George Polya, whose How to Solve It and related books contain themes that may or may not be transferable to the classroom (Davis and Hersh seem doubtful) but show how a first-order mind confronts the seemingly trackless: how to think about doing original worksome task precisely defined but as vet undone.

David and Hersh give Platonists, Formalists, Constructivists, and even frustrated teachers ample innings before cutting the tangle with just

<sup>\*</sup> Notably Mathematician's Delight (1943), Prelude to Mathematics (1955), Vision in Elementary Mathematics (1964): all Penguins. They come in and out of print.

two appealing principles:

"Fact 1 is that mathematics is a human invention. Mathematicians know this because they do the inventing." This means that what seems God-given (the arithmetic and geometry that everybody knows) is no less an artifact than "the newest variation of pseudodifferential operators"; also that "arithmetic and geometry came from the same place as homotopy theory—from the human brain. Every day, millions of us labor to instill these into other human brains.

"Fact 2 is that these things we bring into the world... are mysterious to us, their creators. They have properties which we discover only by dint of great effort and ingenuity; they have other properties which we try in vain to discover; they have properties which we do not even

suspect."

Formalism, they add, is built on Fact 1, the recognition that because mathematics comes from the human mind, mathematical objects are imaginary. Platonism is built on Fact 2. the fact that once these imaginary objects are created they disclose their own laws. For once imagined -ask any fiction writer-imaginary things can have their own character. And mathematics is "the study of mental objects with reproducible properties": mental objects that, unlike the Snark and the Boojum, will not change whenever someone isn't looking.

ENCE their fabled beauty, a by-product of definition and rigor. That Davis and Hersh have gone into three printings in the year of Donald Barthelme's Sixty Stories\* is something the spotter of trends should take under advisement. Barthelme's appeal to the drugged public of The New Yorker is one thing; his durability in hard-cover books and reprints is something else entirely.

How to account for the appeal of a "story" like "How I Write My Songs" save by noting a response to rigor and logic a writer couldn't have counted on even twenty years ago?

\* Putnam's, \$15.95.

Some of the methods I use to write my songs will be found in the following examples. Everyone has a song in him or her. Writing songs is a basic human trait. I am not saying that it is easy; like everything else worthwhile in this world it requires concentration and hard work. The methods I will outline are a good way to begin and have worked for me but they are by no means the only methods that can be used...

Barthelme's reliance on "pop" formulas has been often remarked: less noted is the steely control with which he never violates an idiom, however debased. "Everyone has a song in him or her" is absolute in its observance of both bureaucratese ("him or her") and self-conscious vernacular ("has a song in"): not to mention the precision of "a song." It is our subliminal recognition of these qualities that propels us through a Barthelme text, however empty: and emptiness is an attribute he courts. As surely as when Marcel Marceau, on a bare stage, repeatedly leaning on a nonexistent mantel, persuades us of the mantel's substantiality, Barthelme persuades us that his weird discourses proceed according to laws we should have trouble formulating but nonetheless acknowledge



This is so abstract that not would have believed it even the years ago: the avid perusal owners that "go" nowhere, that sense in some elusive, "mussense) a dénouement. That Balme's readers would often be pressed to state what the lawsthat they intuit is not surprising the ability to follow quick-cut commercials, such skills, how ubiquitous, go unverbalized. Ye following, which would have be Dickens, gives no trouble:

After the marriage Mrs. Davexplained marriage to me.
Marriage, she said, an instit

tion deeply enmeshed with the

Pairings smiled upon by la were but reifications of the law of mechanics, inspired by unior of a technical nature, such as no with bolt, wood with wood screu aircraft with Plane-Mate.

Permanence or impermanence of the bond a function of (1) materials and (2) technique.

Growth of literacy a factor she said.

Though you can have enough this quickly (sixty is a lot of " ries"), still it's noteworthy than man has the way of writing it. le thelme's enviable knack of reproceing his queer effects seemingly will is sustained by his confident that people can take them in. He perceived a new fact about that we of all worlds most mysterious writers, the world you and I live where pages are scanned. This we contains readers, many, who can prehend and enjoy his effects. take pleasure in the near predictal ity of tricks of speech that foll (almost) laws: laws inflexibly partial, like the social laws of Japan.

It's an odd skill, this, that readers are learning we have, a sl ministering to an odd pleasure. I "tricks of speech" substitute "stract forms" and the Mathemati Experience is not far off: the exprience in which aesthetic pleasu keen and elusive, attends teetering at the very brink of the ability subdue surprise by explaining away.

HARPER'S/OCTOBER 19

# THE TRAIN TO KOMPONG SAM

g the world with Thomas Cook

by Simon Winchester

HERE'S A great to-do in Peterborough about the train to Kompong Sam. A lot of wandering commuters insist esn't run anymore. But Mr. Tremlett, from what serious alists would call his "listening in the English city of Peter-1gh-a town perhaps best known ne manufacture of bricks-feels in that it does.

Vhv. only last November an Ausin traveler sent me a letter about ig seen a train running there," ays. "And just the other day I d a photograph in a French magthat showed Cambodian rolling with people inside. I had no ot at all that this was the train to

ipong Sam."

hat's as may be. But at what time the fiery steed arrive? Furthere, what time does it leave-in-I, where does it leave from? Does ave Kampot Central at 9 P.M.? Is e three-thirty from Takeo Town? is it still, as in grander, prewar s, the ten o'clock from Phnom h City, making the run down to Gulf of Siam in twelve hours flat? ust as soon as crumbs of informasuch as these are wrested from gnarled hand of the single Kamhean clerk who is privy to the steries of scheduling for the Camlian Railway System, it will be nted, in full, as Table 7101 of omas Cook's new Overseas Timele-of which Mr. Tremlett is ediin chief, and Peterborough the city publication. Until then Table 7101 nains beguilingly blank, with the rest hint of optimism in the ru-

on Winchester, a contributing editor of rper's, is foreign correspondent for the day Times (London).

bric subscript: "Occasional service. Schedules not vet available."

HERE ARE a great many blank tables in the new, blue-bound handbook of arrival and departure times of the world's farther-flung trains, omnibuses, and ferry boats. Perhaps, so early in the book's career, it is to be expected: this, after all, is the highly ambitious and long-awaited version of what has been the bedside bible of the static traveler for thirty years-Cook's International Timetable. That work came out a dozen times a year, in flaming orange covers. Though it was designed for the vulgar functionaries of the tourist trade, it appealed also to those of us who like to try to work out, at leisure, a railway route from Wolverhampton (High Level) Station to Pretoria, or from Needles to Tuktoyaktuk. But it had a problem.

For even while the world's railway systems and bus lines slowly and steadily contracted, adventurous souls were managing to find their untroubled ways to places that still did have trains and buses and ferries but had rarely been visited by Western journeymen, and were thus infrequently listed in Western timetables.

The letters of complaint that trickled into Peterborough fired Mr. Tremlett into action. Timetabular mitosis was the answer, he argued: the International, newly dubbed the Continental, should restrict itself to the continent of Europe, from North Cape to Sicily, from Ardnamurchan Point to Istanbul, Sirkeci Station; a new blue-backed sibling would be allowed to encompass the rest of the earth. Before long, every country in the world in possession of a publictransport system, no matter how rudimentary, would be listed in what, bearing in mind its English origins, would be called the Overseas: there would be details of how best-and, more important, when best-to waylay said transport for one's personal convenience. The book would come out six times a year and would be air-speeded to every corner of the planet.

IVE ISSUES have appeared so far, the latest with a long editorial that goes some way to explaining the otherwise puzzling lacunae:

"The publishers apologise for the Late Arrival of this edition. This was primarily due to difficulties in compiling the tables within the timescale allotted, aggravated by the Late Arrival of certain data from the Far East." Such is progress: once upon a time it was trains that were subject to Late Arrival. Now the ailment has infected Certain Data, which in turn infect those who would travel, too. And in the editorial of the Overseas, the realities of geopolitics intrude all too rudely.

"Services in East Africa are correct, and are likely to remain so ... except in Uganda, where a more extensive service is likely to be introduced as political stability returns.

"It is understood that bus services remain in operation in Afghanistan, but details cannot be confirmed although the Jalalabad to Peshawar international service is still definitely in operation." (Let them dare try to close the Khyber, one can almost hear Mr. Tremlett mutter as he pencils the finishing touches to Table

"Timings for Japan are now fairly static... though political pressures may mean further severe reorganisations... including the complete overnight closure of many main lines." (Though my ignorance of matters Japanese is fathomless, this is surely worthy of note. Did it appear in the newspaper? What pressure can possibly be so powerful that it can halt the nocturnal movement of rolling stock? One is tempted to conclude it is something in the Japanese diet.)

Advice to the wayfarer is legion in the Overseas, and, on occasion, admirably odd. Thou must refrain, for example, from exporting more than half a million won from South Korea. Cancel your peregrinations in Costa Rica, o ve gypsies and ve "of unkempt appearance," for ye will be slung out at Immigration, Journalists must stay away at all times from Bangladesh, though tourists are more than welcome to sample the manifold delights of Mussulman Bengal, And if you feel you must wire your travel agent in Monaco, try the telegraphic address SLEEPING MONTE CARLO for best results. (Or, if bed- or trainless elsewhere, you might try a Marconigram to PRAGSLEEP MADRID, CASSIM DJIBOUTI, or, most sonorous of all. ENVOY RANGOON, )

Again, note that passports issued by the government of Bophuthatswana are unrecognized in Hong Kong—a colony that applies what can only be construed as arbitrary and capricious immigration policies, by which innocent Finns are permitted to remain without visas for only thirty days, while Danes and Ghanaians can stay six months or even more.

Next, there are town plans, with every important railhead from Aswan to Wellington lovingly laid out in black and white. ("Laredo to be added later!" a note announces, with more urgency than one might expect.) One recent night I was able to trace, with nostalgia, how to walk from the Chicago Greyhound terminal to the Van Buren Street railroad station, and to deduce the quickest route across the Tigris for those desirous of rushing, laden with bag-

gage, from Baghdad West to Baghdad North.

Finally, the hallowed tables themselves—nine thousand, eight hundred and ten, which girdle the world with chronographically simulated pathways of steel and tarmacadam and seaway and riverine passage, fares supplied where available. Table One informs us how best to pass from Montreal to Vancouver; Table 9,810 offers the latest intelligence from the Invercargill to Oban ferry service, via the town of Bluff. The southernmost ferry is in New Zealand, as close to the Antarctic Circle as public transport ventures.

R. TREMLETT and his two assistants (there are six for the Continental, but only three for the rest of the world, he notes a little wistfully and a little wearily) have compiled splendid superscriptions for each country, some of which are magnificently improbable. "The Régie de Chemins de fer Abidian-Niger," says one. Tremlett tongue in Tremlett cheek, "claims to operate some of the fastest and most luxurious metregauge trains in the world." It could even be true: La Gazelle, by which elegant title passes the express from Quagadougou to Treichville, takes but twenty hours to cover 1,145 kilometers—a 35 mph average speed that, in Africa at least, must seem like the fastest mode of travel between the Cape and Cairo. As for luxury—well, there is a supplemental fare payable aboard both La Gazelle and its brother train, Le Belier (it goes from Abidjan to Bouake), and since supplementals are payable aboard Metroliners, one hardly dares imagine what appeal the trains have for itinerant hedonists. Half-bottles of Amtrak Pink wine? Surcharge refundable if delayed at Agboville?

Some legends display a frankness that borders on the brusque. "In Bhutan there are no rail services, poor roads and virtually no public transport outside the capital, Thimphu." In addition, the *Overseas* warns, wanderers in the Bhutanese lowlands will have to put up with a climate that is "hot, humid and un-

healthy," while those in the up should look out for weather to alpine and severe." So much scountry foolish enough to have without railways; it gets short indeed from a Thomas Cool iter.

And, as we've noted before. are a great many blanks. Have sion to take the sleeper from Fu to San Salvador? A daylight e sion train from Lagos to Benin The mail train to Mafeking? S my friend, Not Yet Available. Tremlett "feels badly" about omissions. He was embarrassed I pointed out the lack of a gested dress code for Albania invaluable but seldom found Tr lers Information Manual advises shorts, mini-skirts or outrage trousers"). He was hurt when I him that the Peshawar to Landi kee train did not go on the days his said it did. And he was work about how best to get the lates formation on the train to Komp Sam, "I suppose I'll have to vo to the Vietnamese. I know we di recognize their government in Ka puchea, but they do seem to be ning the place. And that means ing the trains.'

In some ways, despite his bles memory, I still wish a pox on Thomas Cook. After all, he inverthe scourge of tourism. (The Italia nearly found him out: a rumor w around that he was bringing part of convicts to Tuscany, with plant leave them behind in the hill village He nearly got himself banned for Italy, and tourists thereby ban from the Tuscan hills, until he an intercession from Mr. Gladstor government.) And his books, oran or blue, are really, like it or r manuals for the efficient managem of crowds of wretched, sheepl tourists. But it would be wise to f get that sobering fact when order the new and quaintly imperfect Ou seas Timetable. Far better to read alone, in bed or bath, than to imag its real purpose as the ideal toolbo for dealing with that ugly crowd from whom Mr. Cook and his sons ma such a fortune, the herd shot rou the world.

HARPER'S/OCTOBER 1

# **BLACKBOARD ART**

e novel goes to school

by Frances Taliaferro

There is nothing new under the sun, especially at schools.

-Thomas Hughes. Tom Brown's Schooldays

TEPTEMBER brings the true New Year. Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood! Now J is the time for beginnings: w shoes, sharp pencils, clean air, an slate. The drowse of summer, estival postponement, is over; se days are crisp with possibility. ture may admit no difference beeen the day before Labor Day and day after, but everyone who has er been a student knows this anal rush of expectation, so early iminted, so long remembered.

This is the right season for "school vels." Two of them are published is month: Dames, by Elizabeth orth, and Last Days at St. Saturn's, Edmund Apffel. They set me to nsidering school novels as a genre, it that word is probably too limed to express this loose federation stories that chronicle equally the mple joys of Mary Ann's freshman ar at Middletown High and the implexity of Miss Brodie's prime. et all school novels have in comon certain principles, which either overn serenely or become the stuff f parody.

As Elizabeth Bowen has pointed ut.\* school novels may be divided nd subdivided, but the essential disnction-perhaps it is also the esential distinction among studentseparates those that are proschool rom those that are antischool. In roschool novels, school is the seat \* In her introduction to Frost in May,

of order and civilization, the clean, well-lighted place where conventions are learned and values accepted. It is the cradle of hierarchy and the nursery of striving; prizes and demerits are justly given, the class has a top and a bottom, and the Head, in his (or her) wisdom, separates the sheep from the goats.

Antischool novels assume that school is the place where we learn the conventions of oppression and hypocrisy. Here, as elsewhere, the best lack all conviction: management is in the hands of oafs and Frances Taliaterro writes the "In Print" column in monthly alternation with Jeffrey Burke, bores. Survival requires conformity. or even submission. The trophies are brummagem, the Head is a fraud, and all right-thinking readers must find the goats far more interesting than the sheep.

These are bald distinctions, and no novelist renders them quite so starkly, but they suggest the ancient conflict on which every school novel depends: the struggle of order and anarchy. Thomas Hughes established the form in 1857 with Tom Brown's Schooldays; here the Victorian order triumphs, anarchy is routed, the appointed social task is completed. Since World War I-or perhaps since



y Antonia White, Dial Press, 1980.

Colette, whose Claudine at School (1900) is a perfect celebration of natural impulse at the expense of social regulation—the balance has shifted and anarchy is likely to prevail. Why not? School novels provide, after all, microcosms of society.

OM BROWN'S SCHOOLDAYS is the archetype of what might be called the novel of assimilation, though I prefer to think of it as the "new kid" story. Everyone will recognize the plot, which can be set just as successfully in a large hospital (Sue Barton, Student Nurse) as in the army (Private Benjamin). A new recruityoung, green, ignorant-is introduced to an old institution. He encounters customs that are strange to him, precious to the inmates. He is bullied by crusty supervisors and loutish peers; he is usually the victim of some injustice; he waits on the fringe of this alien society, and in the fullness of time he redeems himself by some valorous act that initiates him into membership. Respected by his elders, he finds true friendship with the most honorable of his peers. He becomes the vessel of the culture that once seemed so strange.

Tom Brown arrives at Rugby a little boy of eleven. His father's reflections on the eve of Tom's departure set the tone for Tom's growth as a Rugbeian and a Victorian: "If he'll only turn out a brave, helpful, truthtelling Englishman, and a gentleman. and a Christian, that's all I want." (Little mention is made of Tom's brain, and classroom scenes are peculiarly absent from this as from most school novels; the subject is society, not intellect.) The only faculty member who makes a substantial appearance is the great Dr. Arnold himself. and he too is something of a "new boy" at Rugby. This reverend Head is rooting out bad old customs, which are embodied in the lawlessness of unfit student leaders ("big fellows of the wrong sort"), especially the horrid bully Flashman. Flashman terrorizes younger boys, but when it comes to a fair fight his defeat is certain because he is "in poor condition from his monstrous habits of stuffing and want of exercise." Even so does a degenerate old order vield to the vigor of muscular Christian-

It figures that eight years later, the manly Tom has "fought his way fairly up the School" and is the captain of the cricket eleven. He has achieved his best victories, however, over Satan and his works. The ending of this cautionary novel explicitly reveals the school's purpose: "[A]|Il young and brave souls... must win their way through hero-worship, to the worship of Him who is the King and Lord of heroes."

Tom Brown's Schooldays became the ancestor of a long line of school novels written for children. At worst, they are little more than manuals of instruction that ease the child's entry into adult society. At best, these books provide escape into an orderly world whose customs have their own eccentric glamour: merry pranks, saucy nicknames, obligatory "pashes" or "crushes," midnight feasts. The pleasure is in the feeling of belonging: along with the hero, the reader

is accepted into this demanding ciety. Gratifying these novels abe; works of art they are not.

GREAT exception is nia White's Frost in (1933), a timeless that rewards readers many ages. A young reader for "new kid" stories will find it that. Nanda Grev. a nine-vea only recently converted to Cat cism, enters school at the Conof the Five Wounds. As a new and a new Catholic she is do green. Like any new girl, she make her way through the maz school customs: esoteric privile triffing to the outside world but quisitely meaningful at the conviequally esoteric punishments.

Frost in May is more than a new of assimilation, however, Nanda also making her way as a new C olic, and her acceptance in that the requires more than simply know the etiquette or speaking the line Her spiritual progress follows growth from prim girlhood to relious adolescence. Inevitably Na transgresses, and she is also the tim of injustice, but this is no happy school story on the To Brown model, where all's well ends well. Frost in May is a deep Catholic novel whose subject is fall and the expulsion from Ed Its spiritual kinship is not with T Brown's Schooldays but with A H trait of the Artist as a Young M

"Proschool" novelists share view of school as a precious wo of clarity and control, pristine a immutable. The feeling is not of one of nostalgia for happy gold bygone days; it is also the long for a manageable world-perh: the only manageable world-whi everyone, teacher and student, haves according to type. Even K ling's Stalky & Co. (1899), who Elizabeth Bowen calls "an ea gangster tale in a school setting," not exempt from that yearning the immutable. The feeling is er omized in Nanda Grev's though on leaving the convent:

Where would she find a place



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#### Chabere

Suite 1809, 2 Park Avenue New York, N.Y. 10016 it? In its cold, clear atmoere everything had a sharper line than in the comfortable, peless, scrambling life outside.

en Colette's Claudine bids fareo her little school at Montigny. ears her rue with a difference. going to leave you," she says, take my entry into the world; nall be very much astonished if ov myself there as much as I at school." Having read Clauat School, we know why. Clauis a free lance, with no lovalty y principle but that of her own ement. School is simply a more able version of the larger, mes-'real world," and here she can ct the manipulative skills that rejoice her in adult life. School ill of simple souls, ambitious es, dolts, and blind sensualists; dine amuses herself by placing in difficult conjunctions with other. Thus the scandal of a lesepisode involving two teachers es "a gay finale to the boring ng-lesson. I'd badly needed this thtly distraction."

iaudine is an even more sexual g than her teachers, but she is to subordinate her libido to her ter plan, which is to discover just t goes on in this crazy place. She plains, "All these people were ming to wear me out by forcing to be incessantly trying to find what they were thinking or do." But her relish for the work is ious. She performs with unusual I the immemorial task of adolests: the penetration of adult myses.

n life as in literature, many a stuit has felt that at the heart of all apparent order of school there is ecret madness, if one only knew v to draw it out. Antischool novare written from the point of w of the anarchic student, ever peful that something deliciously ful will happen, that all the teach-, the bores, and the pillars of the nmunity will by some happy acent be unveiled in their full degement. On the rare occasions en such dreams become reality, shock is very great. Even in the dest fantasies of the tables turned d the headmistress in hot water, who could have imagined the diet doctor's love nest, the bloody end, the Authority imprisoned?

B UT THIS is the very stuff of the antischool novel, and Evelyn Waugh would not have turned a hair. To the satirist, school is the last refuge of scoundrels. Paul Pennyfeather, the Oxford undergraduate who is the

hero of Decline and Fall (1928), finds himself quite unjustly convicted of indecent behavior and sent down from Oxford. The porter of his college kindly observes, "I expect you'll be becoming a schoolmaster, sir. That's what most of the gentlemen does, sir, that gets sent down for indecent behavior."

Strictly speaking, only the first half of *Decline and Fall* is a school novel, but it is still the most brilliant

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antischool novel ever written. As a new master at Llanabba Castle, a seedy establishment for boys in Wales, Paul encounters every symptom of derangement. At Llanabba, madness is worn as jauntily as a blatant wig, and no one seems to notice. All the hallowed elements of Tom Brown's Schooldays are travestied: authority, hierarchy, justiceeven sports. To wit: when one of the masters, who is using a real revolver to signal the start of a race, cries, "Oh dear! I'm sorry," it is no surprise to learn that he has shot one of the contestants in the foot, that the foot will turn black and be amputated, and the boy will eventually die. In context, the catastrophe is giddy and hilarious.

Giddiness and hilarity are just what an antischool novel ought to make one feel. Hoist up those shades of the prison house! No wonder the absentminded professor, or even the loony one, is such an enduring figure in our mythology. His existence leaks the jolly secret of adult disorder; he is the chum and cohort of the id.

An elegiac note occasionally slips into a school novel. It might more properly be called a double vision; it has to do with time and with the poignancy of seeing the future implicit in the present. Teachers of long experience, who have known class after class of students, begin to understand the rhythm of the generations, the recurrent faces and characters of the young. The harvest is inherent in the seed time, and the poignancy is in the knowledge that these green sprigs, too, will grow old and die.

School novels that recognize the teacher's point of view are likely to communicate this elegiac feeling. In The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie (1961), Muriel Spark achieves an ironic sadness by making quick stabs into the future, so that the characters of Miss Brodie and her "set" of students are illuminated by these flashes of prescience. The reader has a strong sense of time and its workings, a sense that is also present in Dames, by Elizabeth North.\*

"Dames" is the name of an Eng-

\* Knopf, \$11.95.

B I G W I G G U F F A W
I N C H Z H O S T A G E
A S S I Z E S H P M O I
S U S T A R V E L I N G
E L D E R K B R A N C H
D I I B D I N K I E S T
A N T E N N A A N S I C
D E C A M P S S T E N O
A C H R O M A T I C C R
P R I D I B L U F F E D
T E N D R I L T F A R O
S E G U E S Y E S M E N

Solution to the September Puzzle Notes for "Sixes and Sevens"

Across: 4:(fl) inch(ed); 6. starveling, anagram; 7. (w) elder; 9. steno, anagram; 10. ach-roma(n)tic; 12. far-O. Down: 1. whitebeard, anagram; 2. (g) usher; 3. agon(y); 5. plain-tiffs; 8. mo(1) re; 11. Cree(k). Six-letter words: a guff-a-w; b. b(L-a) ed; c. cordon, anagram; d. (b1) izzard; e. b-ran-ch; f. yesmen, anagram; g. p(m) aced, reversed; h. a.-D-A-pls.; i. weight, homonym; j. b-IG (reversal) -w-IG (reversal); k. astute, anagram; l. segues, hidden. Seven-letter words: a. N(as-all) Y; b. an-(Tenn.); c. bluffed, pun; d. gherkin, hidden; e. host-age; f. insul(anagram)-in; g. (l) assi(Z) es; h. since-re; i. inkiest, anagram; j. famines, reversal of "ma" in fine-s(ugar); k. tendril, hidden; l. (1) (Ching.

lish school for girls. It is need by the requisite student chara worthies and rebels, lacrosson bores and whimsical girls wh sume the names of Winnie-theand his circle There are also f ers whose fortunes run curiously allel to those of the girls, Dame lows a group of friends from 1950s to their several destini quarter of a century later. Fail in its picture of school life, it i precisely a school novel, but is like an educated soap opera. dered with wry skill. Its great i est is in the double vision of time the unruffled persistence of so values into the bewildering comity of adult life.

Last Days at St. Saturn's, by mund Apffel,\*\* brings no senting tal lump to the throat. It is a throwback to Decline and Fall which it is a sort of reductio adu surdum; or perhaps it is St. Trini in the last stages of senile demen It is a boarding-school fantasy se the apocalyptic future; the bar ians are at the gates and socie values will emphatically not be served by the transvestite headre ter, his moldy staff, or his fail evil students. Sprightly and peculvery funny at times, Last Days at Saturn's is half again as long as should be, but it pretty well polis off Western civilization, and w anarchist could ask for more?

There are many gaps in this ess I have said nothing, for instanabout the "nightmare schools" Dickens's Dotheboys Hall and Ch lotte Brontë's Lowood are two them. I have included some bod that are not exactly school nove and I have avoided others: No Johnson's The World of Henry Ori and John Knowles's A Separate Ped come to mind. I have not discuss the image of the teacher in Goodb Mr. Chips or The Rector of Just and I have not suggested the relati of films like Zéro de Conduite a If ... to the antischool novel. N can I even remember the names the school stories I read as a chil but I know they did their work: find school novels irresistible.

\*\* Holt, Rinehart & Winston, \$13.9

HARPER'S/OCTOBER 19

#### AMERICAN MISCELLANY

# RANDOM HARVEST

ing where thou hast not sown

by Don Sharp

ostled back to reality by a shopping cart barking my shins, I came out of a reverie to find myself staring at a loaf of bread inently labeled "whole wheat." word "wheat" had set me ruming about how insensitive the pers were to the source of those set, and shortly I was back twenears to the dusty village (popon 90, in those days) of Vilas, rado. Early in June, a train of Sharp is a frequent contributor to er's and to Boating magazine.

combines converged on the village in annual harvest pilgrimage, occupying every vacant lot and backyard like an army on bivouac—tall machines with fat, black tires, green ones bearing the John Deere marque, the Massey-Harrises with their bright red paint and yellow lettering contrasting with the red paint and white inscriptions of the McCormicks, the Baldwin Gleaners dressed in galvanized sheet-metal crisscrossed by black metal framing that gave them the look of stately Tudor houses.

Camps sprang up around the machines, communities of tents, house trailers, school buses converted into mobile bunkhouses, pickup trucks carrying fuel tanks and spare parts, and red and green two-ton trucks, each wearing its name—Ford, Reo, Dodge, GMC—in proud chrome, each bearing an alphanumerical code—Chevrolet 6400, International KB11—that declared its fitness for hauling wheat out of soft wheat fields on 100-degree days. The whole carnival-color mélange was populat-



ed by a motley crew of quasi-gypsies: fuzz-cheeked kids from high schools and colleges out to make a summer dollar, red-nosed winos from the skid rows of Denver out to sweat their bodies clean while gathering money with which to corrupt themselves again, and a more substantial element with clean shirts who directed the drill of combines and

These were the "custom cutters." a society of summer nomads who swept into the early ripening wheat fields of Texas in mid-May and threshed their way northward to Canada, where the wheat ran out as the first snows came. As their caravans rolled into town and the crews got the machines off the trucks and the boss's wife set up her traveltrailer field kitchen, the boss scouted the area, offering to thresh this half section or that 900 acres, while the local farmer eyed everything from the tires on the pickup to the boss's shoes as he assessed his competence to handle the job.

Our crew slept on the earthen floor of a tipsy garage, one armysurplus blanket under and another over, our sweat-stiffened clothes still on, shoes off for use as pillows and, as we said in rustic drollery, to keep the mosquitoes away from our faces. In the early, early damp gray summer predawn, the boss called us to breakfast, the "board" side of the room and board we got along with our dollar an hour, the garage being the "room." Breakfast suited a crew such as we-rashers of bacon with grease still popping, mounds of scrambled eggs, biscuits and gravy, and pancakes eaten with table manners from five states but in a uniform social milieu: buttonless shirt cuffs trailing through neighboring plates on their way to the saltshaker, field gossip punctuated by the escape of half-masticated comestibles from jaws agape.

B UT IN THE field, our hulking machines, the old Managemick 141s, wide headers gaping like giants' malloomed against the presolstice sunrise that dissolved the remaining

stars as we greased our multiplicity of shafts and idlers, checked the tensions of our spiderwork of belts. cleaned wheat beard out of straw walkers, and filled fuel tanks: the boss, meanwhile, walked up and down the wheat stand fuming hecause the halfhearted dew left it too damp to thresh, pulling a head and crushing it in his palm to assess whether the machines could extract kernel from husk, splitting a single kernel between his teeth to assess whether it was dry enough to store. and, when satisfied, hollering, "Okay, boys, go get it."

We clambered up dew-slickened steel ladders, scraping a shin when a foot slipped-no solicitude from OSHA in those days!-and rumbled into the field like a clumsy phalanx charging a rabble, clanking reels sweeping wheat stalks into the inexorable, swishing cutter bar that decapitated them, the spiraling auger shoving severed heads to the endless conveyor that delivered them to the roaring, spinning cylinder that beat grain and chaff asunder and sent both on to be winnowed by the sieves and straw walkers, the grain going to the bin and the chaff out for the straw spreader and the wind that driveth it away.

The boss's wife brought out "dinner," as we called the noonday meal, in her Oldsmobile station wagon, its chrome embellishments and tail fins absurd against the rationality of the dust-enveloped combines. We ate by turns, the boss taking each machine long enough for the operator to shovel down a meal without regard for manners or the quality of the cuisine. The boss could be depended upon to get the machine down in the low, mucky corner of the field and to clog up the cylinder with damp straw, but by hunkering down on the blind side of the Oldsmobile where he couldn't beckon to me, I could gain the respite of a calm cigarette and glass of iced tea before going back to the sun, the dust, and the chaff that filtered all the way from collar to socks, scratching everything in between.

Late in the evening, as falling dew raised the moisture content of the wheat, cylinders began clogging with a thundering grunch that could be heard a quarter of a mile of the boss gave up and stopped clock. We parked the machines in neat row, headers on the groun take the weight off the hydrau and returned to base for "sup and a wash from a garden hose, to the garage's earthen floor to sthe sleep of the just as spiders silverfish gleaned in our hair.

Working like that for a dollahour in 1958, I made \$190 in days. If you ate bread that year, haps I threshed the wheat for it, we are thus kin, in a distant mar. The odds are good, for I threwheat in Texas, New Mexico, Choma, Colorado, Kansas, Nebra and Wyoming that year. Take I Biff Loman: I tried in seven statoo, and couldn't beat a dollar hour. But none of the other harverew bindle stiffs did. either.

WATCH THE moil in the su market aisle-shopgirls faces incarnadine like primihuntsmen's, housewives dem strating the normalcy of obes stained and callused workmen, cr ly suited functionaries from counting houses-and reflect on the innocence of the dust and sweat assures the fullness of the br shelf. I am annoved with their norance. I would have them kn for I would have them loosen the comfortable smugness and recogn the character of their depender recognize how they are bound people they never see, recognize tradition of harvest toil that stretch to an ancient man stooping und the summer sun with a sickle in

"Put ye in the sickle, for the I vest is ripe: come, get you dow wrote the prophet Joel (3:13). Jo reaper did not stand on a steel p form or sit on a padded seat a did. He stooped so his left hand compassed a handful of wheat sta just below the heads of grain—t is, just below his knees—and brouthe sickle up in his right: a deft rition to the right and the outer cu of the blade pushed ungrasped staside; to the left, and the sickle po

ed the handful, the sharpened curve slicing off the stalks just the ground. The posture was - comfortable nor dignified and nperature reached 100 degrees mid-morning, but Joel's reaper d to his sickle and the weight cantilevered head till (by one t tradition) the constellation b's Tomb appeared—that is, round nine o'clock at night. To e, Joel's reaper could straightoccasionally to bind his handito a sheaf and when the crew ormed a dozen sheaves (the ional number, for reasons that Sir James G. Frazer himself discovered), they gained a rewhile forming the shock, a e to dawdle while surveying wath cut and the field ahead, le moment to debate whether louds on the horizon were rain plague of locusts. Then back to hythmic grasp-and-snick, graspnick, gnats buzzing around -dripping faces, backs crying sundered by a scimitar.

thought of Joel's reaper as I d over the header of a McCor-141, a Massey-Harris 90, or a win Gleaner. With his sickle, s reaper could harvest one h to one half acre per day, or rea 125 feet square, in wheat probably didn't make more than zen bushels per acre-and he to store, thresh, and winnow behe could eat. Twenty years ago, uld cut, thresh, and winnow the uce of 100 acres of such wheat ne day. Now, the state-of-the-art hine can probably get through acres of twelve-bushel wheat in same time.

thought also of the impatient ists who honked behind us as trucks, laden with combines on way to work, labored up hills hose pre-interstate-highway days, tourists knowing little of the pure our hulking machines served the grand scheme of things. I ught of our machines lost in at fields that ran half a mile this , a full mile the other, while l's reaper worked near his home, village; if a comely maiden came glean, perhaps he deliberately pped heads for her, as Boaz arranged for Ruth. Even the sequestered Lady of Shalott knew full well of the reapers "reaping early/In the fields of bearded barley." The tourists, eager to "experience nature" in Rocky Mountain National Park. knew little of what we did and modern supermarket patrons know even less. Everybody knew what they owed to Joel's reaper.

OUND BY good manners to listen to the ravings of a health-food fanatic at a cocktail party, I look over his shoulder to watch effete gourmands spread cheese on wafers while my frenetic lecturer catalogues the evil chemicals that corrupt our bread, and I recall the manner whereby we harvesters profaned the produce of the good earth before passing it on to complacent housewives, innocent schoolchildren, and elegant cocktailparty snackers.

A hailstorm flattened 600 acres of thirty-two-bushel wheat near Garden City, Kansas, leaving wheat heads buried in tangled straw six inches deep. We worked the headers under the tangle as you would ease a wedge of pie from the plate, inching forward so the auger could pull in the straw, advancing the speed to create a flowing mat, the poor machine enshrouded in thick, gray-brown dust, grunting and grinding as it struggled to handle thrice the normal volume of straw. We wore the traditional red bandanna, dampened from the flaxen water bag beside us, over our noses, but a red bandanna, even if soaked in the finest Montrachet, will not stop the dust of halfmildewed Kansas wheat. So we pulled it down from time to time, hawked mightily, and spat huge, slimy gobs of brown spittle flecked with yellow chaff down into the header, a guid pro quo to the source of our torment. We giggled like schoolgirls about what we put into the wheat before we passed it along to the dining table and retold the wheat-field joke of the frantic field mouse who cried, "Help! Help! I'm being reaped!" Many were-a succulent field mouse, fat on fallen wheat, alarmed by my approach, running ahead of the clanking machine, leaping to escape the tangled stalks, and neatly scissored through the midriff by the slashing cutter, its head and shoulders disappearing into the thresher along with a full measure of grasshoppers and crickets, the pieces still kicking as they emptied into the bin.

The cocktail-party gourmand does not know of these things. He pops a sandwich into his mouth as greedily as my combine gobbled up the field mouse, not the least concerned about the unsolicited proteins that cloy his palate. He does not know what went into the flour before the bread went into his mouth and, for that matter, he knows nothing of the sweating harvest crews. Perhaps that is a fair exchange: he does not know what they do and, therefore, does not know what they do to him.

HEAT-HARVESTING culture has its own myths, memories, and scholarship. We discoursed learnedly of fans and screens and sieves, of cylinder clearances and beater speeds, of the raddle-chain v. straw-walker schism that divided the Baldwin Gleaners from the conforming rest; our authorities were field experience or the declamations of some rasping dotard who idled around the grain elevator; our footnotes were complete to date, place, make of machine, and yield per acre of the relevant wheat. We listened respectfully to elder statesmen tell of mule-drawn combines with steamdriven threshers that cut forty-foot swaths across the steep fields of Oregon; heard ghoulish tales of men maimed by prehensile reels, ripsawed by slashing cutters, reduced to bloody pulp by the cylinder; listened quietly to tales of farmers gone mad, firing shotguns into the hail clouds that ruined a season's work.

One's qualification to speak in such wheat-field colloquia, ca. 1960, depended on one's proximity to the Great Harvest of '47, an epochal event of which the oldtimers still speak in awed tones. It was a good year, indeed, of 1,359 million bushels harvested, a yield not equaled until the 1,457 million bushels of 1958.

and that a yield vastly helped by irrigation and commercial fertilizers. The significance of '47, though, lies not in mere coincidences of weather and growing season: 1947 was the year that wheat harvesting took a quantum step in the form of the self-propelled combine, the integration of the several elements of the work into a single machine.

From field to storage bin (and thence to flour mill) wheat heads must be reaped, or simply cut off the stalks: threshed, so grains are beaten out of their husks; and winnowed, so grain is separated from chaff. As early as 1839, the three functions were incorporated into a single behemoth machine, drawn by twenty horses, which cut thirty acres of thirty-five-bushel wheat in one day. Such large machines, though, suited only large holdings, and so went west to the spreads of California, Oregon. and Washington. Elsewhere, reapers reaped while stationary threshers threshed and winnowed; in time, the three functions were combinedhence "combine"-into a single machine drawn by a tractor.

Just before the Second World War, Massey-Harris, a Canadian firm with an active U.S. subsidiary, put the tractor aside and built a combine with its own engine and drive system. This new machine, the Model 21, prepared to set new records for wheat threshing and promptly got stopped by the bureaucratic aberrations of wartime matériel allocations (not surprising, in a world that included John K. Galbraith amusing himself by playing with price controls). In sum, Massey-Harris could have steel to build tractors and steel to build tractor-drawn combines, but couldn't have steel to build the Model 21, a significantly more efficient system for getting a wheat crop in. As the rich harvest of '44 approached and the war machine soaked up the available manpower, farmers (with an eye on wartime prices) grew nervous; wheat-belt congressmen demanded more farm machinery. At the right moment, Massey-Harris offered an inspired proposal: if they could have the extra steel, they would build 500 of the new 21s and consign them to custom cutters of established competence; the cutters would organize a harvesting brigade that would swoop northward in a swath 500 machines wide. The farmers would be pleased; their congressmen would smile; the exception to the rule about steel allocations could be justified by jingoistic hoopla about the war effort. Speeches could be made and the bureaucrats could heap credit upon themselves.

The bureaucrats bought it. Massey-Harris built 500 21s, and the machines made a dramatic northward trek with appropriate attention from media flacks who couldn't make it to Normandy that summer but who still wanted to participate in something heroic. The exercise was a government-assisted advertising and promotion campaign unequaled since the South Sea Bubble, and immensely successful in harvesting the crop.

The 21 was a wide, low machine that resembled a huge crawling insect, exposing the operator to the worst of the dust, its side-valve Chrvsler six-cylinder engine buried deep in its guts so that an oil change was agony, the bin on its side inexorably urging the machine to dress left as it filled with wheat. It cut only a fourteen-foot swath at no more than three to four miles per hour in good wheat, but its wide threshing section. properly set up and properly run. would remove kernel from husk, grain from chaff, with unsurpassed precision and speed. The 500 Model 21s strutted their stuff again in '45 and '46, and by war's end Massey-Harris had amply demonstrated their better way.

Wartime demands brought a lot of old machinery out of sheds to be repaired and thrust into service, but the Great Harvest of '47 brought out even more-and farmers still lacked the machines to handle the crop. Every new combine built was promptly sold and sent to work, but the harvest outstripped the most vigorous efforts. Custom cutters fulfilled their commitments in one place and packed up to go to the next, leaving the owner of an uncut field across the road literally weeping, begging them to remain another week to cut his crop, while the client next on the list threatened to come shoot the

whole crew if they didn't get field before it got hailed out bright-red Massey-Harris 21s inated the vigorous, half-for wheat-belt scene for the next to years. More than any other man the Model 21 saved the Great H of '47 from the weather, Asi overladen wheat stalks threater collapse under the weight of fructifying, whole towns scanne sky for threatening storm cloud scanned the highway to the sou the red fleets of Model 21s. the machines arrived like the ca at old Fort Wingate, schoolchill came to throw flowers; when left, they were bid "Godspeed" sent on to succor the next tow

Nowadays, a big machine, su the International Harvester 1486 current mutation of the old Man mick 141, cuts a thirty-foot at a fast walk, harvests 150 acr thirty-bushel wheat on an insous day. International now contends John Deere for dominance, New I land has risen to a status of corbitive eminence, while the Balk Gleaners (with their Allis-Challe connection) remain the prefer of the custom cutters who run in machines constantly from May to tober. Poor Massey-Harris is fallen, like the mighty, on evil (w its good name shuffled from meg to re-merger, its exchequer in quent disarray. Derelict Model bright paint lost to brown rust, casses cannibalized beyond recor tion for parts, languish behind a ging sheds and cower in thick was as the younger generation of have ters looks askance at the lorn wir age, wonders what it once was, threshes on by without a backyn glance.

HE HALF-SECTION field cli gradually, falls off into a dle, and rises again to half a mile downhill t barbed-wire fence. Rainwater carried weed seeds into this low a dle and the tawny wheat shifts Donegal green, intermixed tweeds, rank and juicy, that come of the cylinder in succulent bits thave not the lightness of ch

fore they are not blown away at up in the bin to reproach ne putatively expert operator. also disturb the airflow through eparators so that kernels of go out with the straw and led weeds. As I enter the weed, I slow the Baldwin Gleaner to vt to give its system ample time adle the weeds.

2 owner of the field rushes up pickup. "You're putting grain 'he yells in apoplectic frenzy. ift a handful of grain from the ome flecks of green, to be sure, 2w. I'm doing a reasonable job, dering the density of the weeds the fact that they stand a foot than the wheat. "Looks pretty up here," I say. "Can't be put-over much." As in a court of the defendant minimizes the of-

ioddam ground is covered," yells armer. As in a court of law, the tiff exaggerates the injury. I ber down, and hunker with him nd the idling combine. He hes straw aside, blows chaff y with sunburned cheeks, and resseveral grains of wheat. Mea a. Ecce signum.

Sixteen grains to a square foot" e farmer declares the ancient -"is a bushel to an acre. You're ig two, three bushel an acre." s right, too. I'm losing two bushels acre. I will cut seventy-five acres veen sunup and sundown: in the cess, I will lose 150 bushels of :at-9,000 pounds, enough to e 8,203 loaves of bread, or ugh to feed a welfare mother with children for years. To be sure, 00 rats of the upper-quartile size ald eat as much between field and ir mill, but my wastage will starve rats. They always get theirs.

I regard the machine, check its for soft stickiness from slippage, raddle-chains for a broken slat. the duct to the fan I see an acculation of pulverized weeds and the blades caked with green roughe, dense and firm, which has commised their aerodynamics. Usualaclogged fan shows up when chaff lects in the bin, but weeds are a ferent matter and the product emping into the bin did not alert me.

I have been losing two bushels an acre. By my carelessness, I would have allowed one acre of weeds in a 320-acre field to cost 9,000 pounds of wheat in a single workday. Those 1,000 rats would have stolen in one season no more of the farmer's labor, the baker's supplies, than one careless operator lost in a single day.

E KNEW OUR machines as a mother cat knows its kittens, as a blind man knows a city street, by a mixture of sight, smell, sound, and intuition grown of hours of attendance on its noises, smells, and vibrations. Did some oily odor filter through the dust and the sweat dripping from our noses? Aha, the crankcase breather is clogged and oil is leaking onto the exhaust manifold. A subtly different smell? The radiator screen needs cleaning, and we know it before the temperature gauge registers the overheating. Did the growling of the cylinder alter? Pour dressing on the slipping belt. Did the rattle of the elevator to the bin soften? So, straw jammed in the lower auger. Did the straw spreader, heard dimly amid the roaring of the unmuffled engine and the cacophony of shafts and chains, cease its busy whir? Simple: its belt has jumped.

Something profoundly elemental inhered in our experience. Despite the intercession of the machine between us and the ground, between us and each individual wheat stalk, we were as intimately involved with our work as Joel's reaper with his. By sight, sound, sense, and smell, we knew what we were doing, knew how to do it well. Our sweaty hand on the wheel, our head bowed over the header, were at one with he who stooped to the sickle, with he who knew from the sound that his scythe needed the whetstone.

That was twenty years ago. Since then, the sun-shading umbrella has become a cab with windows; since the cab shut off fresh air and wind, it got an air-conditioner—and a heater for the fall grain cutting. Once shut in, the bored operator needed entertainment; hence, a stereo system for the twanging country-and-

western or the psychopathic, keening jangle of rock. Fully cocooned, with all audible stimuli totally irrelevant to grain, reaping, or life on this planet, the operator could no longer monitor the machine; the next step, logically in this electronic age, was monitoring by digital gauges.

International Harvester started it and practices the highest form of the current art. In a cab nearly as opulent as a late-model Cadillac (and of substantially higher quality), the operator turns a knob and a gauge registers engine speed; another turn, and the gauge gives ground speed, cylinder speed, fan speed, or the speed of half a dozen other shafts. What was once read by the seat of the pants is now read by the center of the head. No longer does the operator dig dirt from an ear, to listen the more acutely; he reads numbers, compares one with another or with several, and decides whether the machinery underneath is happy with its

I whet the blade of a scythe found in a collapsing New England barn, adjust the handles on the snath, take some sentimental swipes at August hay, and think of Joel's reaper with his sickle. Had Joel's reaper joined me on a McCormick 141, a Massey-Harris 21, a galvanized Gleaner, once at ease, despite fearful noise, he would have found the exercise familiar. There, a tool to cut; here, one to thresh; last, one more to winnow. The cutter is only so many sickles, the cylinder so many flails, the separator so many shovels and fans, the elevator only baskets. The heat, the dust, the breeze on our cheeks-these make brothers of Joel's reaper and me. My work gives me a kinship. I can stretch my hand across centuries and clasp the sweaty palm of Joel's reaper in my own and recognize another chaff-in-the-craw, mote-in-theeye, sweat-on-the-neck wheat har-

I think of those air-conditioned cabs, of threshing not by eye and ear but by intimations from digital readouts. What would Joel's reaper make of those numbers? Would he, like me, fear the lineage has finitely broken?

HARPER'S/OCTOBER 1981

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## PUZZLE

#### DIAMETRICODE

by E. R. Galli and Richard Malthy, Jr.

(With acknowledgments to Babs of The Listener)

#### This month's instructions:

The squares projecting from the perimeter of the diagram contain the twenty-six letters of the alphabet. Imaginary straight lines through the central dot join these together into thirteen pairs. The answers to the twelve clues in italics are to be encoded before insertion into the diagram by substituting for each letter the opposite letter of its pair. Example: If A were diametrically opposite P, and J opposite Z, the answer JAZZ would be entered as ZPJJ.

The answers at 14A, 15A, 25D, and 31D are not in all dictionaries. There is one proper name. As always, mental repunctuation of a clue is the key to its solution.

The answer to last month's puzzle appears on page 92.

#### CLUES

#### ACROSS

- 7. College court associate, at heart spiritual, overturned how presidential elections are scheduled (13)
- 11. Lulu's getting married to pander (4)
- 12. Circle a knot in a tree (3)
- 13. House and stable (4)
- 14. I cried out, "This is more risky" (6)
- 15. Bushmen, losing head, haphazardly disengage gear (6)
- 16. For pieces of chewing tobacco, take a lot of liquids (5)
- 18. Half of allegation could be legitimate (5)
- 19. Addition: one plus one minus nothing plus ten (5)
- 20. Blessing one sacrilegiously for meanness (11)
- 21. It's no good chasing a cab... and tiring (6)
- 25. Chewed up chicle and chestnut (6)
- 29. Ruin of the French island (5)
- 32. Half of Tarzan that is Derek, stripped, is comparatively ludicrous (6)
- 33. Art exhibition takes in one thousand fish (6)
- 34. Jazz singer going back through Waller (4)
- 35. Hinder, in a way, one foot (3)
- 36. Top-notch stud (4)
- 37. Partially callow or sensuous degenerate (6) 38. Resumes concerning intelligence (6)

- 39. It's our wont, possibly, to be exhausted (4.3)
  40. Fellow and I, in preparing to run for office, using delaying tactics (13)

# 10

#### DOWN

- 1. God in Haitian magic halfway based on foolish tripe (
- 2. Officer revised drama-about one line (7) 3. Stern manuscript prepares for war (6)
- 4. This is wrong, barely, after the middle of June (6)
- 5. Coin variant first: "critter" (7)
- 6. Upcoming socialite, embracing drunk, felt shame (7)
- 8. On Sabbath, brother lifted up eyes (4)
- 9. All confused about a "b"—one sounded like "p" or "f" (6)
- 10. Gladly page out loud (4)
- 16. Kind of organ in The Good Earth (5)
- 17. Flirt left twice in twenty-four hours (5)
- 22. To maniac, this could be physiological (8)
  23. Trouble in the promised land, untold times (7)
- 24. Age rum in jars to a vivid red color (8)
- 25. Singers who get very high-actors squeal on one (8)
- 26. Bishop Sheen's boasting (7)
- 27. Take in head covering with short nap (8)
- 28. Relationship aboard? Strike out first (7) 30. More distant in bed, besides (6)
- 31. South American plainsman in gross uprising against Roman emperor (7)

#### CONTEST RULES

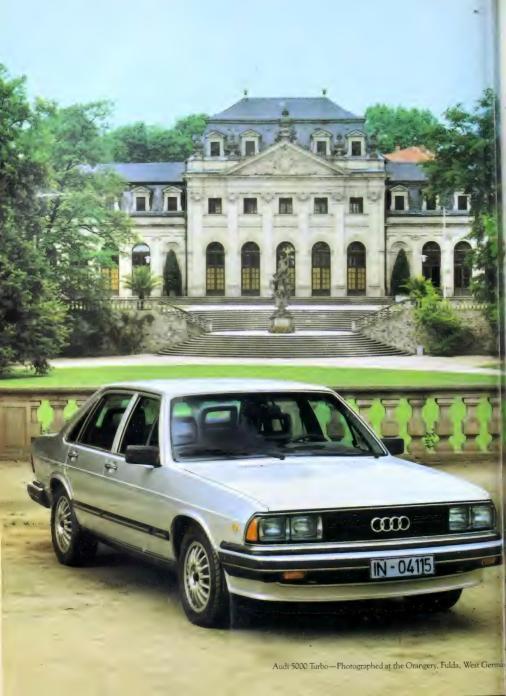
Send completed diagram with name and address to Diametricode, Harper's Magazine, Two Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Entries must be received by October 9. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened will receive a one-year subscription to Harper's. The solution will be printed in the November issue. Win ners' names will be printed in the December issue. Winners of the August puzzle, "Pressing Matters," are Claud Beckham, South Orange, New Jersey; Don Jarvis, Tribodaux, Louisiana; and Helen M. White, Greenfield, Massachusetts.

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BY WILLIAM TUCKER



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# LETTERS

#### Having your cake

Some thoughts on Barbara Grizzuti Harrison's October article about Smith College and feminist education ["What Do Women Want?"]:

Fine schools like Smith College should not concern themselves with providing education in feminism: rather, they should furnish their students with a genuinely "humane" education, the kind that cultivates minds and characters, communicates and affirms ethical normality, and helps one develop the moral and intellectual discrimination needed to distinguish between truth and error, right and wrong, noble and base.

Such an education demands the rigorous examination of and reflection on the accumulated wisdom of the past. If, for example, one seeks to understand the meaning of love, what contemporary works can compare with George Eliot's Silas Marner, Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, and St. Paul's I Corinthians, 13? If one is interested in the nature of law and of justice, what modern books can compare with the writings of Plato, Cicero, and Aguinas? If one wants to know what qualities a "good society" must have, why not read Confucius, Aristotle, Thomas More, Edmund Burke, John Adams, and the Federalist Papers? If one wants to know about the arrogance of power, why not read Shakespeare's Macbeth and Julius Caesar? If one wants to learn about the pernicious effects of envy and jealousy, why not read Shakespeare's Othello? If one desires to understand better the intense demands of the human spirit, are there many contemporary bek that can compare with the work Sophocles, Hawthorne, and Dickes

The study of the great book the moral and intellectual giant a civilization will remind us of he true aim of education: the culta tion of wisdom and virtue.

> HAVEN BRADFORD (W Arlington Heights.

Here comes letter No. 431 alu Smith College. I can hardly believe it has changed so much since 18 -in fact I don't.

Ms. Harrison would have us lieve that young women whose ents have forked over \$7,000 year per kid have actually noth more to think of in life than sex

What ever happened to Roussell Poulenc, Dostovevsky, and even to idiot, Toffler?

I just pledged several hund dollars to the new library, but so elite young women could around and worry about their go itals!!!

Say it ain't so.

COOKIE McC Raleigh, N.

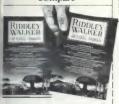
#### Prisoners of st

I wish to congratulate Bry Griffin for his charming expositive of the American literary scene, or least of its more visible aspe-["Panic Among the Philistine Harper's, August and September Unfortunately I cannot share N Griffin's optimism. While one ge eration of literary philistines m be dving, another is preparing SURPRISE.BEST SELLERS FROM QPB

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take its place; and so long as the New York Review of Books and The New York Times Book Review continue to exercise their culturally monopolistic influence their culturally monopolistic influence the Criffin speaks it remain little more than a shirt tenerational anxiety.

Harper is one of the very few mag. until and in Albaraca moday: ... nas the stamina to oppose the ew York "twins." That Mr. Grann's clean-up crew came on the heels of Tom Wolfe's demolition squad is truly a remarkable achievement for Harper's.

It is ironic that the advertisement for the American Writers Congress should appear in the same issue—its "Inviting Committee" (still expanding) reads like Who Is Who Among Mr. Griffin's Foes. And not just Mr.

Griffinis.

Andrei Navrozov President American Literary Society New Haven, Conn.

Let me offer a few reactions to Bryan Griffin's two-part article. Time's recent celebration of John Irving, the nation's premier "schlock novelist" (to use Griffin's apt phrase), in a cover story complete with photos of Irving jogging, wrestling with his son, and offering advice on the movie set of Garp, plays right into Mr. Griffin's hands. What perfect timing! What perfect confirmation of the accuracy of his jeremiad on American literary culture! Indeed. the career of John Irving epitomizes as no other can the depressing phenomenon described at length in the article. It's all there-the inc-stuous relations among writers, reviewers, movie producers, and newspaperfeature writers; the great media hype (Garp came in four colors in the supermarket); the elevation of softcore pornography to high literary status (Garp again); the trendiness masked as courage or "willingness to grapple with issues of our time": the astounding absence of standards. That Time's literary knee jerked with such predictability in the matter of Irving just shows that the Day of Judgment has yet to arrive, but it also reveals that (to draw on some least is shricking hysterically in its death throes. The best criticism of Irving, incidentally, has been given by the man himself. "I just write dirty soap operas," he said once, with a qualifying laugh. Precisely—except without the irony, the laugh, the wink. That's exactly it. And he's pretty good at it, too. But Time and others (to Irving's great delight, naturally) insist that he is that great rarity, à la Charles Dickens, I suppose, "the writer of real quality who is also popular."

I wish I could leave it there and join Griffin in happy anticipation of the Final Collapse, but there are problems with his article that I don't think should be overlooked. Jeremiad writers are not known for making fine distinctions; indeed. they feel that the time for this has long passed, that nothing but a total conflagration will do. And Griffin is true to form. In roaming over the literary landscape he hurls thunderbolts at just about everybody in sight reverybody, that is, who has ever gotten any media attention). He zaps John Updike along with Shere Hite, Mailer along with Irving, Gav. Talese along with Pauline Kael, and so on. This is ridiculous, a failure not only to make fine distinctions but to make any distinctions at all.

BILL HINGHLIFF Lake Forest, Ill.

Articles like "Panic Among the Philistines" are the reason I take literary courage from Harper's and continue to derive pleasure from writing and from the reading of stories and articles in the little presses, for example, and occasionally a novel from someone like John Fowles.

I wonder if the time is not right for the reemergence of the "Victorian" novel? I happened to reread Silas Marner about a month ago and thought the reading public and its editorial directors might do well to rediscover that kind of literature.

ROBERT B. STUART Bellingham. Wash.

Thank God for anyone who writes well, even a prig. With the excep-

tion of William Burroughs and man Mailer, just about everwhom Bryan Griffin sweeps so mb. ily off the shelves deserves to he swept. But when Griffin sniff every prose exploration of sexual implying that none of it can possed be serious or good for us, he's r ing the same critical characle that condemns. And when he gives to gem like "voices worth listening are almost always quiet voices." being silly. Certainly about Arican literature. You can hardly i Whitman, Melville, Wark Two Thomas Wolfe, or Ezra Por "quiet,"

Griffin is a little sneaky, give that list of people nobody's ea heard of 'Stewart, Page, Braco Campbell—sounds like a law fir as the establishment he'd like to tablish. Everyone's peddling a oriculum, even Young Turk Griff Yet it's so good to see the likes Styron and Oates and Updike skered, and so good to see some hur applied to our predictable liter with the deserves at least we seene, that he deserves at least we

preferably loud cheer.

I might have mustered two cher for Mr. Griffin. but he's gloats over failures that, had they so ceeded, might have been beautifuand that's not cheery. Yes, Norm Mailer, for one, failed to write grand novel he announced twenthree years ago, but that hurts, huus all. Griffin is clever, but for the tone of gloating over such things

is a fool.

MICHAEL VENTUL Los Angeles, Call

Thank you for the Griffin article. They made me feel as Crusoe mit have felt finding another man's fo-

prints in the sand.

I had cravenly resigned mysto silent bafflement when, instead twhat everyone else extolled as temperor's grand raiment, I cousee only sallow nakedness with pudigious genital endowment. Of courmy attention was caught by a fetatters of trendy syntax here at there, and an occasional knott tassel of fantasy. But I could snothing I would call a proper goment, something that one could

pped in against the cold, or gain ity and grace by wearing.

never seemed accurate to blame programmed voveurism of conporary writing on a "social revion," since the world has als been in many respects a mess far as we know, and bipedal nals always animals. It is for this reason that the artistic sensity felt compelled to select from common experience those moits, episodes, and intuitions that ld be made to yield transcence and some hard-won hint of ouraging nobility or harmony, ever transient. Such salvage was artist's task not long ago, but eems to have been replaced by cket-oriented solipsism and senlism. Instead of being able to ight in recognition of some bit of versal verity, we are given artful sons of sensual experience, the notony of which paradoxically ds to the tired comment, "So what is new?"

As noted, much contemporary ting contains enormous amounts well-researched information-peros as a substitute for what used be thought of as the artistic imagtion. But it seems to be imposle for anybody to write today out even the Pharaohs or the ritans without sneaking in that quant scene or two that requires the publisher's list a "warning" ead "enticement") of "explicit sex d violence." Is the diligent writer o hastens to market his interangeable and tiresome revelations "artist"? Or does he deserve anner name?

VIRGINIA KENNAN Charlottesville, Va.

### Lessons in contempt

I have just had the extreme diseasure of reading Mark Lilla's the article "The New Irrelevance" \*\*Harper's\*, August]. My displeasure rives from the \$d \( \text{e}j \) \( \text{a} \) vu quality of e piece, its striking and depressing milarity to scores of other neocontrative think pieces that dot the tellectual landscape of our day. I el moved, in the spirit of Horatio



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Alger, to formulate a set of guidelines certain to lead to journalistic and cocktail-circuit success for aspiring neoconservative essayists/wits:

1. Never, ever deal directly with

- the substance of the arguments of your opponents. Instead, attempt to taint your opponents through a sneering association th persons and institutions of suspect intelligence (Lilla says of Philip Green that "although he serves on the editorial board of the Nation, he is a decent writer ... "), cutting irony (how Michael Reich, a Marxist, uses sophisticated and elitist statistical inquiry to speak to the issue of equality, or how William Ryan's book on equality sells for \$14.95), or the charge of quaintness ("Dr. Rvan is a marvelous museum piece" according to Lilla). The list is not exhaustive. What is important is to ignore honest intellectual engagement.
- 2. Blame the troubles of our age on the belief in equality and the widespread nurture of envy by social scientists and other ideologues of the "new class." Without ever really defining the term, the aspiring writer must be encouraged to sprinkle the concept "the new class" throughout the pages of his article. If he should fail to do so, the pages of The Public Interest and Commentary will be forever closed.
- 3. Reserve one's strongest contempt for academic social scientists committed to a more egalitarian and just society (as Lilla so cleverly puts it, "...a professor dressed in beat-up corduroys, a flannel shirt, and work boots ... deliver[ing] some scholarly sounding harangue about bourgeois values...") who have never met a payroll.
- Mention at least one classical philosopher to stand as the self-evident, unargued contrast to the intellectual deficiencies

- of contemporary academics (in this case, Lilla nominates Plutarch). It is not important, indeed it might prove to be dangerous, to carefully argue how such a classical figure better illuminates the issues at hand. Simply throw the name in as a means to indicate the transient quality of much of contemporary thought.
- 5. Pav homage to the good sense of the "common man" as he chooses products in the marketplace or rejects the boring lectures of his "hip" professors, but carefully avoid encouraging him to increase his participation in political life. If the common man demands that government attend to some of the irrationalities and injustices of the market system (no doubt having been duped by the ideological bleatings of the "new class"), loudly raise the alarm against the threat to libertv.

EDWARD S. GREENBERG Boulder, Colo.

### With respect to Peabody

In your August issue, Hugh Kenner writes an essay in praise of Guy Davenport ["The Geographer of the Imagination"], and in the course of this essay he speaks, seemingly with admiration, of the nature of scholarship. He is himself, of course, a distinguished scholar, which renders all the more mysterious the carelessness of some of his remarks. Among other things, he says that George Peabody is nowhere mentioned in the Britannica; in my edition, published in 1968, he is mentioned at least three times, and not least conspicuously under the heading PEA-BODY, a town in Massachusetts that was renamed in his honor because he was its most notable native son. He is also mentioned under the heading YALE and under the general listing for the Morgan family, J. Pierpont Morgan the First having got his early training in London under Uncle George. No doubt there are other mentions of him in Britannica, but I am so little scholar that I feel no itch to put them.

Then we have the matter of overalls, which Kenner quotes la enport as saving were "original in the 1870s, trainmen's workclot designed in Europe, manufacts here by J. C. Penney, and dissinated across the United States as railroads connected city with ci What on earth is this all about? J. C. Penney Company was four as late as 1902, and Mr. Perhimself was still with us unt couple of decades ago. I remen meeting him, and a tiny little felhe was. Moreover, the J. C. Per-Company didn't manufacture thing, in the 1870s or after, certainly had no connection with garments of French railroad work

I wonder how many other ported scholarly facts adduced Messrs. Davenport and Kenner of a dubious nature?

Brendan (New York, N

HUGH KENNER REPLIES:

If one announced George Wington's absence from the Britanic one would be understood to muthat he was somehow absent fhis proper place among the W's, of that diligent scrutiny of cognitories would disclose no traced him; and so it is with Peabody.

As for J. C. Penney, we learn funder. Gill what we should have a pected, that the firm was founded in time to distribute across American the twentieth century, garments a ropeans originated in the nineteeth Penney "didn't manufacture at thing"? No doubt. Texaco does manufacture tires either, yet te (made by others) bear its brand.

I am glad Mr. Gill once laid ee on J. C. Penney. One is always gu to learn of fructive experience, he must not let it go to his hed nor suppose it qualifies him to mo categorical statements about a n connection between Penney we and French trainmen. The wolbeyond New York, is a fecuplace.

HARPER'S/NOVEMBER 18

### Can-Do to the Fore

A merican esprit, pride, esteem, good feeling—call it what you will. It rises and wanes in track with our national triumphs and troubles. At times it bursts forth with such force that few can escape its unifying effects. One glorious time was America's Bicentennial celebration. Others came with the U.S. hockey team's gold-medal victory in the Olympics, and release of the hostages in Iran.

The character and flavor of a period often can be glimpsed in the recurrent phraseology and catchwords of the day. A few years back, we heard too much about America's "malaise," its "crisis of con-

fidence," our "sick society."

Did those phrases and the attitudes they bespoke truly mirror the mood of Americans at the time? Do they apply to the America of 1981?

"These are important questions for many reasons, particularly when viewed in the context of a new political movement in America," says *Public Opinion*, a magazine published by the American Enter-

prise Institute.

"A new administration is now purposefully trying to rekindle American optimism. Indeed, much of President Reagan's proposed economic plan is based precisely on national psychology, rather than straight economics. One aspect of the supply-side idea suggests that a new attitudinal buoyancy can play a major role in pulling America out of the economic doldrums. Reaganomics pre-supposes a 'can-do' attitude."

Is can-do coming back? To find out with any accuracy means gauging and quantifying the American mood. We mea-

sure the gross national product, consumer prices, stock market values, the money supply. Why not the American spirit? Why not an index of the Gross National Spirit?

The editors of *Public Opinion* have fashioned such an index. Drawing on the skills and findings of public opinion survey organizations and specialists, they have traced the rise and decline of the American spirit from the mid-1970s onward

"Sisyphus-like, from the depths of deep recession and political scandal in 1974, the boulder was pushed up the mountain to the Bicentennial and beyond," writes coeditor Ben Wattenberg. "Then, decline. The Carter years, as President Carter pointed out, were indeed years of growing malaise. ....So far in 1981, we have seen a big bounce in an optimistic direction."

With good reason. A sense of positive purpose now infuses our national leadership; a resolve to alter course and get the country moving again. This spirit seems to be transmitting itself to the American people. In growing numbers, they sense that America is groping its way back. They are feeling better about themselves, their future, and their country.

Not that all is well; far from it. There's a long, winding way to go to restore America to where we want it. But, at least, a solid start has been made. A new mood is taking form; a rekindling of optimism, a bestirring of hope. A climate is being created. It gives promise of renewed performance, progress, and achievement for Americans. both as individuals and as a nation.

The Gross National Spirit is looking up.



### THE COMPLEAT AMERICAN

A vaudeville revue

by Lewis H. Laph

N HIS performance of the presidency, a romance in what appears to be one act, Ronald Reagan plays the leading role as a series of impressions of American minor heroes. The reading of the part lends itself to Mr. Reagan's genius as a supporting actor as well as to the skittishness of an audience that has trouble following a complex narrative or subtle dialogue, Mr. Reagan offers a complete repertoire of sketches, which, when taken together, exemplify the sum of the American ideal. If some of his characters seem in conflict with others, or if they succeed one another as quickly as the scene-changes in a vaudeville revue, that is the nature of a genre that exploits the American talent for paradox and the one-line joke. The more obvious routines can be described as follows:

The Rolling Stone.

scott fitzgerald once observed that American lives have no second acts. Perhaps the gentleman had lived too long in Hollywood. American lives generally consist of nothing but second acts. It is the first and third acts that few people know how to stage or write.

What other nation in the history of the world can boast the testimony of so many converts? The theme of metamorphosis recurs throughout the whole text of American history and biography. Men start out in one place and end up in another, never Lewis H. Lapham is the editor of Harper's.

quite knowing how they got there, perpetually expecting the unexpected, drifting across the plains with the tumbleweed until they lodge against a woman, a business venture, or a jail.

Huckleberry Finn, the archetypal American hero, was forever planning to light out for the territories, ceaselessly mapping his escape from the walls of authority. The man on whom Mark Twain modeled the character ended as a prosperous judge in Montane.

The national hope of the second chance, the fresh start, the new beginning, derives from the faith of the first settlers determined to build in the American wilderness the wonder of a new Jerusalem. For the last three hundred years the country has been loud with the cries of evangelical good news. Upright citizens, well known until the day before yesterday for their churchgoing and their devotion to their wives, abruptly dissolve in the solution of what Freud called the polymorphous-perverse; two years or twenty minutes later, they reappear as neo-Expressionist painters or acolytes seated at the perfumed foot of a Hindu sage. Nobody dies in the country in which he was born. Across the span of an average American life the landscape changes as frequently as the truths voted in and out of office. Entire towns disappear as suddenly as circus tents; so do names, reputations, economic theories, stock-market booms, baseball teams, and middleclass neighborhoods.

The figure of the enthusiast who has just discovered jogging or a new

way to fix tofu can be said to stall or, more accurately, to tremble the threshold of conversion, as representative American. The zenry reveres movement for its sake, as if in the mere act of good from one place to another a in might stumble across the ineffable the nineteenth century. America placed such a high value on sple that hundreds of them died in a road accidents and steamboat plosions. The loss of accelerate filled the passengers with uneasing (somebody else might be gettithere first), and they would urge a captain or the engineer to force engines beyond the limits of the baermaker's art.

Corporate vice presidents chartheir affiliation and place of idence almost as often as army ficers or Mexican field hands. practice of serial monogamy, bround to the dimension of a light industry in Mr. Reagan's adopted state California, sustains the illusion of mance through the disappointmet of middle age. The American ich exists as a concept in motion, a gitive and ill-defined shape glimp on the horizon, a play of light on summer sea seen in a beer comme cial, the sound of a harmonica he blowing in the wind.

ike HIS ancestors before him, Mr. Reagan preserving which provides the season or opportunity beckon An actor and a liberal Democration the age of forty-three, Mr. Reagant provides the season or opportunity beckon the season of th

not yet begun the study of pol-Twenty-seven years later he become president of the United s, a conservative Republican, an enthusiastic convert to an omic theory as fantastic in its gn as the aerodynamics of a

r. Reagan's predecessor in the te House was a willing but not e so adept student of the quick ige. Mr. Carter made his ence on the political stage in Georas a self-proclaimed realist, a -upon-a-time naval officer who it be known that he wouldn't d taking fortified positions nst Russians, black people, New k intellectuals, and miscellaneous its of the devil. By the time he ame president his militancy had ened into the posture of a moralwho preached the blessings of ian brotherhood to the South icans and discounted the specter international communism as a anoid delusion. Before he left e he had moved stage right e again, delivering his exit lines inst the tanks in Afghanistan and treachery of Moslem holy men. he impulse toward transformation responds to the frontier strategy real-estate speculation, a strategy umarized in the advice "settle sell." Before the roof had been on the church it was time to ve further west. The contempoy markets in political and culturtheory operate on the same prinle. Mr. Irving Kristol, the dean academic capitalism, once prided iself on the purity of his faith in stsky. Several of Robert Kenly's lieutenants in the war against me consoled themselves for the s of that war by serving as attor-7s for the Mob. Charles Colson, o offered to run over his grandther if the action would serve interests of the state, now travels h Billy Graham's television troupe, eaching the virtues of Christian ascience to grandmothers threated with the loss of their pensions. rry Rubin has given up street revition for the more profitable anthy of the stock market, and dridge Cleaver, who had spoken r the Black Panthers, went on to

speak for God through Word, Inc. and the Eldridge Cleaver Crusade.

The Booster.

→ HE ROMANCE of the intrepid American individual as a solitary figure bearing west into Utah appears to have been an invention of the literary East. The country was settled by people moving in groups, by transient communities mounted on wagons and making up their laws and customs as they passed, arguing violently, through the forest. Such people chose for their captain a man who could organize and persuade, who knew how to get folks doing things together from their own volition and interest, who could rekindle their guttering enthusiasm with descriptions of an imaginary Eden lying in wait just over the next line of hills. Of this paradise the captain was as ignorant as anybody else in camp, so he had to have the confidence man's gift for adjectives. The westering caravans had little use for leaders in the European sense of the term, men distinguished by a unique ability for bravery, learning, eloquence, or greatness of soul. The development of extraordinary capacities assumed the scaffolding of authority and class distinctions that Americans had left behind in the wreck of the old world. People learned to travel light, and the chroniclers in the western deserts constantly reported great numbers of dead horses and abandoned wagons on the trail. What was wanted was a salesman and a booster, a good fellow on the order of George F. Babbitt or Ronald Reagan, somebody with shallow roots who could attach himself to whatever enterprise promised the hope of profit.

In a nation of strangers it was necessary to insist on a severe degree of conformity. Without the implacable enforcement of what de Tocqueville called "the tyranny of the majority," the crowd might break up into its component languages, nationalities, professions, and sects. Because the American association was voluntary, because people had come because they wanted to come,

because those present literally had brought the country into being, they had no choice but to accept the dictum, abridged, in the idiom of bumper stickers, to the phrase "Love it or leave it."

James Q. Wilson, the eminent student of American government and politics, once remarked that he had spent much of his life confined within authoritarian institutions—the Catholic Church when he was a child, the United States Navy when he was a young man, Harvard University as a tenured professor. As a totalitarian system demanding conformity of thought the greatest of these, he said, was Harvard.

The desire to be and to act like everybody else shows up in the American passion for borrowed identities, for joining clubs and wearing clothes stamped with safe labels, for not daring to risk an opinion at odds with those of the presiding majority. The suspicion of a man acting alone or thinking for himself remains deeply rooted in the American character. Mr. Reagan recites his golden commonplaces in the full knowledge that success comes most readily to the individual who merges his own interest with the interest of the town, the project, or the team.

The Cockeyed Optimist.

→ HE DOCTRINE of the second chance and the new beginning carries with it the good news that the battle is never lost. On the wagons moving west into Oklahoma in the 1890s, the tattered signs read, "In God we trusted, in Kansas we busted. Now let her rip for the Cherokee Strip." Americans hold that talent and grit overcome all obstacles, and if a man can put together a future out of whatever lumber he finds lying around on the bank of the Pecos River, nothing is impossible. The fool optimism implicit in this attitude is as characteristic of Mr. Reagan as it is of the improving spirit of reform.

The attitude has its obvious strengths. People who believe that nothing is impossible sometimes succeed in accomplishing the impossi-

ble. Mr. Reagan struck precisely the right note in early September when, having called together his economic advisers to demand further reductions in the federal budget, he said that he knew he asked a difficult and unpleasant thing. but, "If not us, who? If not now, when?"

The weakness of the approach lies in its use of the past as an armory of comforting fables rather than as a reminder of the vastness and strangeness of the world. The national theology grants the primacy of hope over experience. The conviction that the world can be made new as of noon tomorrow accounts for the naïveté, not to mention the crackpot smiling, of the recent convert to a newly minted theory.

Mr. Reagan apparently never lost faith in the promises of glory. His father was a failure, his childhood by all accounts a model of smalltown cruelty and unhappiness, and yet, in defiance of Freud and Skinnerian schools of human behavior, the circumstances seem to have left Mr. Reagan unharmed. He went west rose in the world, cut his opin-

ions to fit the cloth of the new country, fixed his eye on the main chance. dved his hair, and offended nobody. He passes grinning through the labvrinths of government and the terror of assassins, makes friendly jokes as he cancels the federal subsidies of widows and orphans, exhorts Congress, with modest self-effacement. to arm the less stable nations of the earth with weapons more barbarous than all the hordes of Genghis Khan. listens with serene contentment to the quack geopolitics of Gen. Alexander Haig, bestowing on the nation unsound public finance as if it were a school prize. Mr. Reagan announces the glad tidings of what F. Scott Fitzgerald described, in a somewhat different context, as "the orginstic future," a future in which all wrongs would be righted, all differences resolved (presumably by a committee of foundation officials), and where everything would be synonymous with everything else. In such a dream of heaven the present exists solely as a point of departure, a depot linking the nonexistent future with a nonexistent past.

The Pillar of the Community.

cannot bring MERICANS themselves to trust a poor man. The visible signs of wealth testify to an inward grace, and without at least some of those signs scattered around his house or on his lawn an American loses all hope of holding an audience or a reputation. Mr. Reagan's ranch and palomino horses, his opulent friends, expensive cowboy boots, and crystal jellybean jars inspire the confidence of his countrymen. So solid a citizen could not possibly have neglected to acquire the spiritual and intellectual goods commensurate with his standing in the community.

Seeing is believing, and an American success, if it is to count for anything in the world, must be clothed in the raiment of property. The national distrust of the artistic or contemplative temperament arises less from an innate philistinism than from a suspicion of anything that cannot be measured, stuffed, and

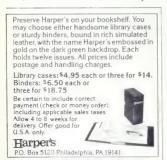
mounted over the fireplace in a

Men remain free to rise and a to fall, and if they fail it is bec: they willed it so. Mr. Reagan scutimes seems less than sympatheti the suffering of the poor, but a carping editorial writers mistake form of his sympathy. Secure in knowledge that salvation belong the flesh, not to the spirit, the prof the community understands the poor choose to be poor. Pow doesn't really hurt them. If it they would go to California.

Jefferson D was elected preside of the Confederacy was said triumpha in the South that the man and hour had met. The same could said of Mr. Reagan's accession to White House, The nation has app ently given up on such a thing a science of government; it no lore expects its politicians to argue an herent system of ideas, or to be to office anything beyond an a teur's knowledge of political ediomy or foreign affairs. Mr. Real meets the expectations of moral intellectual insignificance. What me ters is the brilliance of the period mance, Like Franklin D. Rooses another actor with as many face the occasion demanded, Mr. Real plays the part of a great America He plays it so well, seeming to to the character a protean huge and fluidity, that he satisfies the vi for miraculous romance. His a ence wants to listen to the tales Scheherezade, to be astonished hi procession of marvels. If Mr. Real can sustain in his audience the ing suspension of disbelief for entire term of his engagement. will deserve the accolade that Cae Augustus bestowed on himself at end of his reign.

The dying Augustus knew that had successfully enacted his role the farce of empire. To the court nervously attending the ceremony his death he said, "I've played part well. Dismiss me with plause." Those were his last words.

HARPER'S/NOVEMBER





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### POMP AND DESPERATION

England's retreat from civility

by T. D. Allm

OYALTY and riots; riots and royalty. There seems almost a symbiotic correlation between pomp and desperation in Britain these days. In the space of twenty-four of the most memorable hours in recent British history. for example, the grindingly poor Toxteth district of Liverpool was seared by violence yet again. Dozens of people were injured and an innocent bystander named David Moore was killed by the British police. The next morning the British government -in the midst of the worst economic crisis the country has known since the Depression—dispensed some \$2 million on the nuptials of the Prince and Princess of Wales. The photographs of Moore's mangled body made the newspapers in London, but the day was dominated by the captivating smile of Lady Diana Spencer.

The violence in Toxteth was only the most dramatic incident among scores of civil disorders all over England this year, just as Prince Charles's wedding was only the most lavish act in a royal pageant that grows more elaborate and popular with each performance. Bad times, of course, generate an enormous appetite for fairy-tale escapism. Yet Britons in authoritative positions dismissed the juxtaposition of the worst civil disorders of this century in Britain with the most gaudy royal extravaganza since the coronationas they habitually dismiss events that do not correspond to Britain's view of itself-as isolated incidents, a mere coincidence.

T. D. Allman is a contributing editor of Harper's and East Coast editor of Pacific News Service.

"It was, in truth, a sumptuous party," the Guardian wrote of the wedding the next day. "But we are back this morning with the intractabilities of Britain and the world." Officials took a similar line on Toxteth. What had happened there was regrettable, but had no general significance. Yet after returning to Britain for the first time in several years, it seems to me that the British -hardly for the first time-are wrong about the condition of both their country and themselves. The conventional wisdom remains that Britain has been in a state of steady but gentle, irreversible but on the whole well-managed, decline since the end of World War II. The problem, as many in Britain see it, is not that Britain has changed, but that it has failed to change enough to keep up with the rest of the world.

In fact, Britain's royal pageantry has always had an unerring capacity to put its stamp on change, whatever the nature of those changes, much as the Oueen always gives her royal assent to the legislation her ministers send her, whatever provisions the new laws contain. Britain today is astonishingly different from what it was even in the late 1970s. In its own way, the country has changed as much in the four years separating the Oueen's Silver Jubilee in 1977 from Prince Charles's wedding this year as it changed during the entire twenty-five years between the jubilee and the Queen's coronation in 1952.

This year's royal wedding, time will show, has inaugurated a distinctive third phase in Britain's postwar history, just as the coronation and the jubilee were the bookmarks in

the two previous chapters in the lde chronicle of Britain's devolution. each case the crowds cheered. royal family waved. The British out more flags. There was drinking if not dancing in the streets, but, a this is no overdramatization. British were attending a kind of neral. Nothing rouses British hors for the future like another roll extravaganza, but in the end all ceremony and all the optimism we followed by the failure of the hopes, then further degeneration often commingled with scandal at finally, yet more pageantry.

What, then, are the characterists of this era, of which Prince Charles nuptials provide a royal souven! To paraphrase Acheson's aphoris: between the coronation and the julee, Britain lost an empire, After to jubilee, it failed to find a role. To day Britain has three million unes ployed, in spite of all that Non Sea oil, and its industrial econor is in a state of collapse. But asl watched the wedding and then traeled around London, it seemed me that what was new about Brain today was not the inability master the world nor even that will which to compete in the world. Son thing was different.

What was new was that the diss lution of Britain's fundamental instutions had begun. Britain no long can be said to be living in gente poverty. For many Britons the poerty is worse than ever, but in imanners Britain has become increaingly coarse. The country's pow vanished decades ago, but its civili is now vanishing too. Everythingfrom the popular music to the b

ior of the police—reveals a new rseness, a strange new brutality, British life. The poor are not just in. They are angry. And the rich id many remain rich in Britain) in to have lost their discretion. less than the oil producers of abia, they flaunt their wealth. Most prising of all, Britain, to an ext unimaginable only a few years in, has become a society of violence I fear.

I don't just mean the riots. (Brithas had riots before, though ver on the scale of those that occred this year.) Rather, what seems we in Britain is a kind of pervasive, v-level fear that characterizes viot societies like the United States, twhich is absent in essentially nviolent societies like Japan (and itain itself until recent times). I

stayed, for example, with three different sets of friends while I was in Britain, and what struck me was that in this age of disappearing formality. a whole new ritual had entered their lives. The day is long gone, of course, when the guest was expected to dress for dinner, or even hesitated to come down to breakfast in a robe. But this time, unlike in the past, one was expected to learn an elaborate lockingup routine. Doors were always to be locked when one went out, even when someone else remained at home. When the house was empty all windows were locked too and at night, lights left on.

On the London Underground, I also noticed signs warning muggers that they faced up to life imprisonment for attacks on passengers and staff. Other signs—on the train to

London airport—advised passengers to watch their baggage closely. On the Caledonian Road in north London I saw a group of youngsters in two cars acting in that oddly threatening way one often sees in New York. They jumped in and out of their cars at a stop light. They shouted obscenities at each other and passersby. One youth picked up a brick and then tossed it a few vards at nothing in particular. The situation was not dangerous, but it managed to communicate a sense of ill-defined alarm, and to hint at barely controlled rage. I found myself walking a little faster down the pavement, and at the stop light, the passengers in a third car rolled up their windows. In Mayfair, London's most elegant district, someone had scrawled "Niggers Get Out" on the window of an expensive boutique. In a much poorer neighborhood, near the City, one found such spray-can graffiti as:



"If you can't get a job, do a job," meaning mug or steal.

N LONDON'S Brixton or Southall, in Manchester's Moss Side and Liverpool's foxteth, these mere resonances of fear and violence give way to something else entirely, a kind of ingrained social pathology usually considered characteristic of an American ghetto.

Beneath the headlines about the riots, the most important things to understand are, first, that the riots weren't racial, and, second, that it wasn't just the rioters who turned to violence. "Black" rage in Britain now describes the attitude not only of many blacks, but of very large numbers of white Englishmen as well. And the coarsening, the brutalization, of British society infects the forces of law and order too.

What happened in Toxteth the night before Prince Charles's wedding is only a dramatic illustration of what has become of society and its institutions in many British cities and towns. Having already thoroughly alienated the local population with their brutality and arrogance, and (as in a number of other places) helped provoke the very outbursts they were supposed to control, the Liverpool police went on the rampage on the eve of the royal wedding. Turning to tactics long used in Northern Ireland (but until recently unthinkable in England itself), the police charged into crowds of people, shouting racial insults at blacks but attacking whites as well. The police also turned their vans and Land Rovers into lethal weapons-driving them, indiscriminately and at high speed, into crowds of people, both white and black,

It was in such an assault that David Moore—white, twenty-two, unemployed, and partially disabled—was killed. Clearly uninvolved in the disturbances, Moore was limping along a narrow lane when a police Land Rover ran him down at high speed. The police vehicle dragged Moore for thirty-three feet, then sped off, leaving local people to tal—him to a hospital, where he died four hours later, on the morning the royal

festivities began. That same night, in Liverpool, shocked whites—including a member of the Liverpool city council—saw police engaging in such activities as hanging a black youth off the side of a building by his hair while they punched and beat him. In a typical incident, the police invaded the house of a woman who was planning a royal-wedding party, dragged her teenage son out of the house, and beat and kicked him in their van before he was taken to the station, clad only in his underpants.

This police riot was followed by an official cover-up. Although, as one observer noticed, the police Land Rover that killed Moore sped away with such evidence as "samples of Moore's blood, hair and skin tissue embedded in its bodywork," the hitand-run vehicle was never identified. Evidently, the police had hosed it down themselves. There followed a kind of conspiracy of silence. No policeman in the area admitted any knowledge of the incident. The local chief constable also professed an inability to discover who had killed David Moore, though it is inconceivable that he did not know which of his men were driving which vehicles, and where.

Until recently, violence on any side was considered un-British. The epithet "men of violence" was used to describe the terrorists of Northern Ireland. Yet today it is clear that the repressive tactics used for more than a decade in Ulster have now infected British authority as a whole. The country has become a land of one, two-many-Belfasts. The most astonishing revelation of the riots was how the British police treated the people. But almost equally astonishing was how whites, blacks, and Asians were united in their hostility to the police. "The problem isn't race," a white youth with a workingclass accent told me. "It's that we're all treated like niggers now."

UST AS, in earlier days, beneath the royal pageantry, Macmillan and Wilson personified the inadequacies of the "new Elizabethan age," so now this new period has another exemplar.

Suffice it to say that Mrs. Margai Thatcher-unlike the Oueen and t Prince of Wales-cannot be accust of having the common touch. The is the lady, whose proclivity for cial confrontation is matched or by her taste for flowery hats, w toured the slums of Liverpool in Jaguar limousine. When she cho to speak to some of the local peop Mrs. Thatcher did not alight. stead, she rolled down the winds and beckoned them toward her she left, her car was pelted with matoes-thrown by whites as well blacks.

Like Wilson and Macmillan befo her. Mrs. Thatcher believes she guiding Britain into a brilliant ne age. Once her bitter economic me icine is swallowed, she asserts. will do for the country what the sr cial relationship with Europe at North Sea oil were supposed to before, But Prime Minister Thatch is as different from Wilson and Heat in fact, as the period of British h tory she personifies is different fro the phases over which they preside When all the grand strategies and promises for the future are discour ed, the essential difference between Thatcher and them-and between now and then-is that they believe at bottom, in conciliation rather that confrontation, and in hope rather the in a social dynamic of selfishnes Macmillan tried to bring the manne of a country squire to the manag ment of the welfare state. Wilson socialism, however addled and cor promised, was based on the faith th Britain could be made to work for everyone, and that spirit informed even the popular culture of the tim One has only to remember the Beatle to grasp how astonishingly change their native Liverpool-and much of the rest of the country-is t day. Bounce, charm, a kind cheeky working-class insouciance a now things of the past. Like the young policemen (who are of exac ly the same origin), the young riote of Liverpool today are fascinate with the paraphernalia of violence They wear their hair short. The leat er jacket is their uniform. Thes whatever their color, are the younge brothers of Sid Vicious-not of Joh

Paul and George and Ringo. f these are the children of a new in Britain, then Mrs. Thatcher is r mother. Her policy toward the ger strikers in Northern Ireland simple and inflexible one: let n starve. But in fact that has been policy toward the disadvantaged. unemployed, and the youth of rest of the country as well. In past, it could be said of Britain it was a country that, whatever ies and illusions it might maincould be counted on to be unmonly civil to itself. Today, the ked men of the Provisional IRA. rampaging bobbies, and the posng hooligans of all races have perfect prime minister. She emlies, with almost eerie insensitivthese startling brutalizations. It ot that Britain has lost its capacfor royal pageantry. It is that it ms to have forsaken its sense of desse oblige.

OW DOES one convey the nature of change in a country like Britain-which still, in spite of everything, lacks t capacity for fundamental catharthat some other nations possess? I was preparing to leave the intry, I tried to think of the most ing image of the new Britain I I seen. The London slum of Brixis only four stops by Underund from Buckingham Palace, ere the crowds had gathered in s of thousands to cheer the Prince I his bride and the Queen and we all the Queen Mother, who ms to sum up some vanished age of power or glory, but only of itish niceness, and who is the most pular member of all the royal fam-

The royal paraphernalia, however, pped at Brixton. Brixton was not corated with flags and pictures of yalty at all. Instead, it was domited by an immense mural, covering entire side of one old building, picting an impending apocalypse, shows a hydrogen bomb exploding er London, while a crowd of tiny ures in the foreground—including ince Charles and Margaret Thater—gaze out at the viewer uncom-

### AN IRISH MIST SETTLED OVER THE EVENING.



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## IRISH MIST. THE LEGENDARY SPIRIT.

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prehending, and impotent, in the face of what is going on.

Brixton, however, looks like a place where the bombs already have dropped. There have been two riots in Brixton this year, and one sees scenes all too familiar in the United States—boarded-up shops, abandoned houses, drunken derelicts, litter in the gutters and parks. But most of the devastation in Brixton, it was clear, had not been caused by the risters.

It was the government that had leveled whole blocks of the place. Old houses had been thoughtlessly condemned and torn down, and impersonal, half-finished public housing put in its place. One had the sense of a community, not a collection of rioters—but it was a community that was being ripped apart, a little the way Britain has been over the last thirty years, by forces it does not understand, and over which it has no control.

What made Brixton so different from other parts of London was not that many of its inhabitants are black (there are also many whites) or that many of its inhabitants are poor (poverty is hardly new in Britain either). It was that these people knew they lived in a country that had no place, and held no future, for them. The unemployed youths of all races mingling on the street corners knew it. The unemployed men of all races, sitting in the same parks and speaking with the same, almost unintelligible working-class accents, knew it. And on the side streets, the white, Asian, and black householders all seem united in the same, almost hopeless struggle-to keep what little they had in the face of a creeping devastation all around them.

Walking back to the tube station, I passed a slogan scrawled on a wall. "Looting takes the waiting out of wanting," it read. If it is the worst of times for many in Britain today, whatever their color, it is also easy to form the impression that it is the best of times for many others. The graffiti of Brixton was a mockery of an advertisement for a British credit card, which also promises to take the waiting out of wanting. After I

left Brixton I went back to central London and did something that, like a lot of things in Britain these days, seemed alarming only afterward, when you stopped to think about it.

Like many affluent Britons who support Mrs. Thatcher and her stern capitalist ethic, I took out my own credit card and went on a spending binge. I took a few friends to lunch. Then I bought a few souvenirs of the wedding in Carnaby Street. People had been kind to me in Britain, so I also took a few more friends for drinks. That evening my host and hostess and I locked up the house, and went to dinner, again at my expense, at a neighborhood restaurant—nothing faney.

The prices these days in London are astonishing to an American. If you are British and unemployed they must instill some mixture of rage and fright. Cigarettes are \$1.75 a pack. Subway tickets cost what intercity rail tickets once did. Hotel rooms cost \$150 or \$200 a night. Our quiet meal in an unpretentious restaurant came to \$153. When I totted it all up I had found I had spent nearly \$400 that day, but of course I easily could have spent a thousand-had I taken my friends to the truly fashionable bars and restaurants and nightclubs with which London, in the midst of all its various troubles, now abounds even more than in the past.

ow do people react to a society like the one Britain has today? They make a statement, and even in times of trouble, most statements are not made by setting off a bomb or throwing a brick. The strongest impression of Britain I took away with me was neither of the lavishness of the royal wedding, and that kind of British self-indulgence of which it was the paradigm, nor of the devastation of Brixton, that metaphor of all the problems Britain seems not so much unable as unwilling to solve.

The image that stuck was how different the kids on Carnaby Street today are from the kids one saw there when I was their age. For a time that little alley had seemed to embody everything that was fun all Britain, and nice and cheery, while it has special relationship and horth Sea oil were chimeras or in Today the miniskirts are gone. The hit songs are all nihilistic. I wate one young couple—no different for dozens of others I had seen—so down Carnaby Street. The yoman had stuck a safety pin throw his earlobe. He had a chartrecrewcut. He wore jackboots, a made of spikes, the inevitable leajacket. But his most interesting i of apparel was his T-shirt.

It was the Union Jack—this wing-class youth had turned all flags that flew in royal Londor his own purpose, to the statemen wanted to make. He drew heavily a cigarette and passed it to his friend, who was similarly dres. These young people did not he good teeth, and the loveliness of day made their skin look very plit was clear they had little educate But emotionally, and in terms style, everything about them show they understood a lot—about Fain, its future, about themselves.

They walked aimlessly through in streets of London, past restaura that charged more for lunch to they, if they had jobs, could earn a week. The Savile Row suits designer frocks in the windows gan out at them, but they did not le back. They-or was it another of all the other similarly dres young couples?-disappeared i Piccadilly tube station, heading one of those outlying districts wh everyone lives in public housing most of the men are on the do and the major event of the week the soccer brawl, followed by drunk at the local pub, which she up tight an hour before midnigh

Prince Charles, it occurred to a was the true heir to his mother. Shad grown from girlhood to mid age covering all the cracks a breaks and illusions and failures Britain's decline with a thin veniof royal gilt. Now Mrs. Thatcher a the hit-and-run police and the riing kids had a new Prince Charmi—a constitutional monarch for the Age of Punk.

HARPER'S/NOVEMBER 19

## WITH SO MANY PEOPLE WORKING SO LATE, WHY ISN'T MORE WORK GETTING DONE?



The trouble with commuter railroad stations is that they tend to be misleading economic indicators.

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but higher. In fact, it's fallen during six of the past seven quarters.



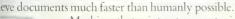
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### THE SILENCE OF THE JEWS

Israel's own anti-Semitism

by Jacobo Timerma

sraeli newspapers are published six days a week. But the seventh day is not, as in the Bible, set aside for rest. It is the day when you catch up on the week's reading.

In October 1979, when I began writing for the Tel Aviv evening newspaper Ma'ariv, just a few weeks after I had been expelled from Argentina, it seemed a good idea to publish a series of six articles about some of the things I had experienced during my thirty months in jail there and about some of the conclusions I had reached after thirty years as a journalist in that country. While I was preparing the articles. Ma'ariv offered their publication rights to a number of newspapers outside Israel and announced that the articles would soon be made available in Hebrew.

During these first weeks in Israel. I was warmly welcomed and I received invitations from many prominent people in the country's political and cultural life. So it was no surprise when I heard that the director-general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Josef Ciechanover, wanted to talk to me. We met in his office in Jerusalem, along with two other officials, who were in charge of Argentine and Latin American relations. Dr. Ciechanover told me that according to information gathered by the Israeli government, four people would be assassinated in Buenos

Jacobo Timerman, a prominent Argentine journalist, was imprisoned by his country's government and eventually permitted to emigrate to Israel, where he now lives. His book Prisoner Without a Name, Cell Without a Number was published by Knopf this year.

Aires if my six newspaper articles appeared: Rabbi Marshall Meyer, Robert Cox (the editor of the Buenos Aires Herald), Rabbi Roberto Graetz, and my own brother José.

The night before this meeting, during a reception that brought together journalists, diplomats, and politicians, the editor of the Englishlanguage Jerusalem Post, Ari Rath, told a large circle of people that the Argentine ambassador to Israel, Jorge ("Coco") Casal, had expressed great concern about the impending publication of the articles. Casal had insisted, with much nervousness and emphasis, that the consequences in Argentina would be dramatic.

Of course, the conversation with the diplomats in the Israeli foreign



ministry the next day did not beg in such a theatrical vein. How did feel in Israel? I felt fine, I explaine How did I feel about Ma'ariv? I f fine. How did my family feel? Th' felt fine. What did I think of Israe Well. I was thinking about it.

I was treated to an overview of the situation in Argentina and remind of the efforts of the Israeli foreigministry on my behalf. When the question of the six articles came under the word of the six articles came under the word of the six articles came under the word of the wore of the word of

There was a moment of silence; didn't last long. I suggested that it Israeli government arrange the d parture of the four people in que tion, that this could all be accomplished in thirty days, and that the I could publish the articles. The asked me: "And what if they don want to leave?" I answered: "The that is their decision and we wi publish the articles."

The foreign-ministry officials sai that they would think about it an we arranged to meet again in a fedays. I asked them to invite the ector of Ma'ariv. Shalom Rosenfeld.

We all met some days later in Te Aviv. I had spoken beforehand t Rosenfeld (who had himself sper four years in prison during the Bri ish mandate in Palestine) and h thought my proposal was sensible He said that he had faced the sam blem when the first news of the orts of Soviet Jews to emigrate ched Israel. The Israeli governit decided to maintain a prudent nee (diplomatic relations had not been severed with Moscow) and 'ariv decided to launch a camgn in support of the Soviet Jews. senfeld assured me that whatever ision I made, Ma'ariv would back. Some of my articles had already n translated into Hebrew. "If you'e to go to prison again," he rerked, "choose the British rather n the Argentines."

E WENT to the meeting or at least I did with some optimism. Dr. Ciechanover was iting for us with some news: a up of parents of young Jewish soners had gone to the Israeli emsy in Buenos Aires and had aded that the Israeli government ck the publication of the articles. e parents had been told that if the icles were published their children uld never reappear from their ndestine prisons. Ciechanover rerated that the Israeli government uld not interfere in my decision d that there was complete freem of expression in Israel, censorip being exercised only in matters eatening the country's military se-

I asked if the information was dible. He believed so; the source s reliable. I asked how many ung Jews were included and was d between fifteen and twenty. I id I would think it over.

I had to take this new information to serious consideration. These the real hostages. The four who are originally threatened could ave the country; if they chose to ay, they would be running the risks at everyone runs when fighting for cause. After all, young Israelise being sent to the front every y and they were not being told to oid getting hurt. The young Jews Argentina, however, could not

ave prison. I found it very difficult carry the weight of such a decion on my shoulders.

In his office at Ma'ariv Rosenfeld

again insisted that the newspaper would support me, whatever my decision. But he said he could not advise me, because he did not know Argentina as I did and he could not judge properly whether the Argentine government was capable of such a massacre. I told him the government was indeed capable of it, that it had carried out such massacres on a number of occasions and had dvnamited the bodies afterward. He then suggested that in exchange for a promise not to publish the articles, I should ask that the young people be released. I told him that the Argentine government would not consent to that.

A week later I was in New York, where I called together the leaders of several major American Jewish organizations to debate the question at the headquarters of the Anti-Defamation League. I began by thanking the thirty or so men and women present for what their organizations had done to secure my freedom, and then I told them about my recent discussions in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

I argued that we were being subjected to blackmail by the Argentine government. I told them the blackmail was not directed solely against Argentine Jews but against Jews all over the world, because the military dictatorship in Buenos Aires was trying to censor the Israeli press by holding hostage the Jewish community in Argentina. We could not expect an opinion from the hostages; therefore we had to decide for them, as we had done in the case of the Jews in the Soviet Union.

Some of the leaders said that this comparison was not apposite, because Soviet Jews cannot organize themselves as a community and cannot choose representatives, while Argentina's Jews had functioning institutions. It seemed to me a matter of semantics. If the Argentine government could threaten to murder a group of young Jews because it was under attack from a Jewish journalist, and the Jewish institutions in Argentina could do nothing about it, then I thought the situation was essentially the same.

I proposed the following: that all

the Jewish institutions represented in an organization called the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations of the United States call a press conference, inform the world press of the blackmail we were being subjected to, and announce the imminent publication of the six articles. At the same time, the Argentine government would be warned that the international Jewish community and democratic governments worldwide would take due note of aggression committed against any Jew in Argentina.

The discussion continued, sometimes heatedly. It was finally agreed that another meeting was needed, to which the president of the Argentine Jewish community would be invited to express his opinion on the matter.

The meeting was scheduled for a month later, when I was to return to New York. The president of the Delegation of Argentine-Israeli Associations in Argentina, however, asked that I not be present. This seemed reasonable to me because it was plain that he feared reprisals from the Argentine government, (I had come to realize that some Argentines were frightened even to be seen with me. When I reached Israel after my expulsion I received a telegram from the Argentine Zionist Organization congratulating me on being free and on having chosen to live in the Jewish state. But the telegram was in code!) In any event, he decided not to take part in the meeting at all, even without me. I joined the group when it convened again, but because we had no opinion from the Jewish leaders of Argentina, we could not reach a decision about what should be done.

Here we have one of the gravest dilemmas in contemporary Jewish life. Several questions are involved. How do you calculate the level of anti-Semitism in a country? Do you add up the number of synagogues bombed, the number of schools attacked? Do you add to that the subliminal campaign against the image of Judaism? And how do you estimate the freedom of action of Jewish leaders? In a formal sense the Jewish leaders in Argentina may enjoy more freedom than their countries.

terparts in the Soviet Union, but they

I finally resolved that I could not publish the six articles. I believed that unless there was a collective and public announcement concerning the articles and the threat of reprisals in Argentina, the young Jews would be assassinated. I was also certain that nothing would happen if Jewish leaders around the world publicly denounced this macabre attempt at blackmail.

INCE THEN I have often asked myself whether, in better circumstances—if I had not just emerged from prison but instead felt as I do today—I would have published the articles. I suppose I would have. But this is only conjecture.

About other matters there is no doubt. The motives of the Israeli government are clear: it was responding to the concrete threat of the massacres. There can also be no doubt about the motives of the American Jewish leaders. They respected the independence of each community, although I disagreed with them over the margin of freedom that the Argentine Jews had for the making of a decision.

Nevertheless, dubious episodes did follow. One in particular stands out. In January 1980 the International Federation of Newspaper Publishers decided to award me the Golden Pen of Liberty at their annual congress that year, which was to be held in Israel on May 25.

The news was received with great pleasure by the Israeli government. Some five hundred editors from the principal newspapers of the world would be coming to Israel. It would be a marvelous opportunity to explain Israel's position at a time when its image had been deteriorating in the world press. The Chagall salon of the Israeli parliament was offered for the award ceremony. Prime Minister Begin agreed to address the assembly.

All the arrangements were made, and invitations in several languages were sent out. Then, just a few days before the ceremony, the newspaper Ha'aretz revealed that at the request of the Argentine government, the ceremony would take place not in parliament but at the Hebrew University. Buenos Aires had indicated that it would be offended if, on May 25, the anniversary of Argentina's independence from Spain, I should be honored in the Israeli parliament. I tried, unsuccessfully, to confirm this report. The president of the Knesset, Yitzhak Berman, insisted that certain parliamentary activities made it impossible for the Chagall salon to be used for the congress that day.

At the ceremony in the Hebrew University, no single government official of any level was present except for the mayor of Jerusalem, Teddy Kollek. It was explained that the minister of defense, Ezer Weizman, had just resigned and that every official was occupied. In my acceptance speech, I pointed out that although I was an Israeli citizen the Israeli government was treating me as if I were still an Argentine priserver.

That same night a large number of high officials of the Israeli government—including Yigael Yadin, the deputy premier, the minister of foreign affairs, the president of parliament, and several other ministers —attended a reception sponsored by the Argentine embassy.

In response to criticism in Israeli newspapers the next day, Berman stated that there had been no planned absence by the Israeli government and no pressure from Argentina. His own decision had been personal. Then he revealed through a parliamentary spokesman and in a radio interview that a group of Argentine Jewish leaders had explained to him that it would be better if the ceremony were not held in an official building, because of the repercussions the Jewish community in Argentina might suffer.

I have experienced many episodes of this nature. I have never received even a vaguely coherent explanation of any of them. There are a number of coincidences and contradictions in all this:

I. It is evident that Argene-Jews are frightened of reprisals of punishment if something happen in Israel that is not to the liking of be military dictatorship.

2. It is evident that the Isrembassy in Buenos Aires has menormous efforts to help Jews have been imprisoned or who hisappeared, and to rescue all thit can and bring them to Israel. Thas caused a number of clashes tween Israeli diplomats and Jew leaders in Buenos Aires. One of latter spoke harshly in a discuss with the Israeli ambassador. "I dedicate yourself to the sale of planes," he said, "and we'll latter Jewish affairs."

3. It is evident that the Isr government tries to comply with wishes of Argentina in almost evpossible way, especially in arms sa and that it asks that Jewish lead of other countries who would be the Argentine Jewish community so quietly.

What is difficult to determine the motives for this policy. Is the raeli government frightened of prisals against the Jewish communin Argentina? Or is it that beca Argentina is a client for Israeli amsales, the government is not intered in the destiny of Argentina's Jeespecially since those Jews do wish to defend themselves?

There is something here to must be clarified. The left-wing prethroughout the world, never fails accuse Israel of being a supplier arms to Argentina. Indeed, a jonalist as important as Bill Moyasked me, during a television program, my opinion about Israebeing the major supplier of arms Argentina. I had to correct him telling him that Israel is a min supplier of arms, although this did change the moral aspect of the prolem. (The major suppliers are Fran and West Germany.)

My feeling is that Israel is in coff those terrible situations in while all solutions are difficult and painfult must sell arms to maintain production lines and it has to copete with the major powers. Yet must also act prudently and magreat efforts to help Jewish committee.

ies that may not wish to risk ything in their own defense.

It is a fact, however, that the Jewleaders of Argentina are conntly frightened. On many occans they have pressured the Israeli vernment to adopt positions favore to Buenos Aires. They have ed to pressure me to be silent, nething that Israel has never a.e. This is the best evidence of ir true situation, of their difficult

Something similar happened to gar Bronfman when he visited São ulo, Brazil, for the Latin Amern Jewish Congress in the fall of 80. As president of the World Jew-Congress, Bronfman took part in gathering and, naturally enough, ske to the English-language press. his statements to the Brazil Herald stressed the situation of the Jewcommunity in Argentina and arulated his concern about the nurous acts of anti-Semitism there. Then there was a repeat of my exrience with the Israeli parliament. e members of an Argentine Jewdelegation met with Mr. Bronfin and asked him for a letter that ruld clarify the statements he had ide to the Brazil Herald. This letwas presumably for them to preat to the Argentine authorities ould the authorities protest Bronfin's statements.

What is specifically Jewish about ese episodes, perhaps, is that they seem to lead to a blind alley. hat do we do? What is the best swer when no one answer seems to solve the many conflicts that afct Jewish communities? Above all, at do we do about the fact that ce again we are witnessing the inful quandary of the Jews of the aited States, the most powerful wish community in the world? ace again, as in the 1930s, Ameran Jews are being called upon to silent. My own experience tells e that the gravest danger that has flicted the Jews of the Diaspora has it been anti-Semitism but that deite the passing of so many years, ch time danger threatens we do ot know what to do.

A few weeks ago I was interviewed Washington by the correspondent of the Jerusalem Post. I told him that I believe no one has an adequate definition of anti-Semitism. We all know what an anti-Semite is, but not what anti-Semitism is. So I tried to think up a definition for him, doubtless a personal one. I don't recall my exact words, but I will express them here in this way: "Anti-Semitism is the silence of the Jews in the face of the anti-Semites."

HERE MUST be something that the Israeli government knows about Jewish life in Argentina that I do not know. I also presume that the Argentine military government has a motive for maintaining this strange kind of relationship, which we will one day fully understand.

Late last year Yossi Sarid, a Labor member of the Knesset, invited me to Jerusalem. About that time the evening newspaper Yediot Aharonot began publishing a series of articles by the journalist Mira Avrech. She had been invited to Argentina by the military dictatorship, and although she is essentially a gossip columnist, she was treated as if she were a maior political writer. She was received by President Videla and escorted to the prisons by the minister of interior himself. The articles were highly favorable to the Argentine government.

Sarid wanted to know why the Argentine dictatorship was so interested in presenting a good image of itself before Israeli public opinion. After all, Israel was powerless to do anything to improve the dark image of the Argentine government.

I could think of two motives. First, that this was a preparation for the change of government in Washington then imminent. It was expected that the Reagan administration would be favorably disposed toward Argentina, but it was also known that even the most reactionary American government would not be able to support a country considered to be anti-Semitic. So the best place to get a credential as a good friend of the Jews was in Israel itself. Affirmations by Argentine Jewish leaders that there was no anti-Semitism in their country

might not be believed, but Americans trust the opinion of Israel.

Second, Argentina wanted to safeguard its sources of arms. If the Reagan administration would not modify its predecessor's ban on arms sales to Argentina, there would always be a hostage Jewish community in Argentina to insure that Israel would continue to be a "friendly" country.

In 1976, before he was elected prime minister, Menachem Begin was in Buenos Aires. Later, at a seminar held in New York, he said this:

Let me tell you what my wife and I saw only two months ago in Argentina. Nazi literature openly sold in all the shops. Millions of copies of Mein Kampf, that unholy so-called book, written by that "embodiment of all evil in mankind," as Churchill called him, are being sold and bought. Even books of speeches by Goebbels and the writings of Streicher are sold. When I was there, I met with the leaders of the Jewish community and I told them: remember, my friends, Nazi literature means one thing, a call to kill the Jew. After the experience of the Thirties and Forties, there is no other interpretation.

I am not always in agreement with Begin. But I am frequently in agreement with him when it comes to defending Jewish lives and dignity. What I said in my book, Prisoner Without a Name, Cell Without a Number, is precisely what he said. The situation in Argentina recalls the ideology, mentality, and economic chaos of Nazi Germany, but it is still impossible to predict whether or not there will be a holocaust. What can be said is that the signs are ominous.

And the silences are the same as those during that sad epoch: the silence of the Jewish leaders of Argentina and of the United States. And also of Israel. (Since becoming prime minister, Begin has not once returned to the theme he sounds above.) Someone, some new Arthur Morse, will have to tell us what is happening. But it must be now and it must be a book of actuality, not of history.

HARPER'S/NOVEMBER 1981

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### **Harper's**

# The Energy Crisis Is Over!

w we heat OPEC

by William Tucker

N JANUARY 28, 1981, after less than a week in office, President Ronald Reagan announced that he was bringing an immediate end to the price trols that had governed American oil for lost ten years, speeding up a process aldy set in motion by President Carter. With t simple act, the energy crisis of the 1970s led.

You would have hardly known it from readthe newspapers. Reporters, making their mds of the usual reliable sources, asked y one constituency—consumer groups at they thought of the decision. The conner groups put up their usual howl, comining that it would only mean higher prices. Thus the Associated Press report of the ry, the next day, began like this:

WASHINGTON (AP)—American motorists can expect to pay even more at the gasoline pumps in the next few days as a result of President Reagan's first major economic decision.

Reagan is making good on a campaign promise to remove immediately the remaining price and allocation controls on petroleum.

Angry consumer groups charged that gasoline and heating-oil prices could rise by 8 to 12 cents per gallon over the next few weeks as a result of the decision. There was not the slightest suggestion of what the long-term effects of the decision might be. Nor has there been since—except for a few scattered editorials in the Wall Street Journal and The New York Times.

So the news is told. When President Reagan asked for a review of the situation this summer, his advisers told him that the decision to scrap price controls had effectively ended the energy traumas of the 1970s. Consumption was declining, domestic drilling was skyrocketing, imports were down, and OPEC was starting to fall apart. His response was reported to be: "Why doesn't anybody tell me these things?"

It was a legitimate question. Apart from a few economists, probably no more than a handful of people have yet realized that the current collapse of world oil prices is the direct result of the American people's decision finally to face reality. We have already swallowed the bitter medicine, and the cure is working. Remarkably, nobody has even realized it yet.

ET US TAKE a look at what has happened since President Reagan decided last January to accelerate President Carter's 1979 decision to remove oil price controls by fall 1981, and thus to end, with one stroke, the long-drawn-out attempt to

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protect consumers from reality.

For a few weeks, oil prices did rise, as consumer groups had predicted. Within month, gas prices at the pump had clim by about ten cents a gallon. Heating oil a went up by about the same amount. Dome oil prices, freed from constraints that had be them at about twenty-nine dollars a bar quickly jumped to around thirty-six dollar barrel—a change that should have reflecterise of about fourteen cents at the pump looked as if consumers might be in for a rot time.

But then strange things started to happ As late as December 1980, the Department Energy had been predicting that world supplies would remain tight "indefinitel and that world oil prices might soon moving up through the range of \$45-50;

But by March the major oil companies sidenly found themselves with growing involves on their hands. By May, refineries it a 20 percent oversupply of oil products, a were starting to worry about storage problet. They did the only sensible thing. They start to cut prices.

By the end of May, heating-oil prices we down throughout the country by four or freents. Gas prices at the pump fell below the January levels. The national average of galine prices across the country fell to its low-level in two years. Sporadic price wars broout in various areas. By midsummer, copetition between two service stations in Cocinnati had lowered the price of gasoline seventy-three cents per gallon at one point, as cars were once again lining up outside fillistations—this time to buy the new cheap gasoline—this time to buy the new cheap gasoline.

Before very long, these events started have repercussions on the world market. It early summer, every major OPEC natic found itself with growing stockpiles. Liby always the most militant of OPEC member lost 60 percent of its customers between Apand August because it refused to lower i prices. Nigeria also had large surpluses. OPE production as a whole has now fallen 30 percent since 1979.

What happened in Mexico was tragicomi In June, the nation found itself unable to sits oil at the premium price of forty dolla a barrel anymore. The minister for oil, Jorg Díaz Serrano, faced with a collapsing marke lowered the price of Mexican oil by four de lars. Mexican public opinion, however, a customed to high prices, was outraged at the decision and demanded that the old price is restored. Jorge Díaz Serrano, till then considered the favorite to succeed Lopez Portillo to

oresidency next year, was forced to resign office, his political career ruined. But bil still could not be sold at \$40 a barrel, subsequent oil ministers have now lowered orice by \$3.90—holding back the last ten apparently in an effort to avoid Jorge Serrano's fate.

he story being told is that Saudi Arabia deliberately created the oil glut by pump-10 million barrels of oil a day instead of revious 8 million, in order to "discipline" r OPEC members and end up with a unit price of around thirty-four dollars a el. Yet many observers are skeptical of interpretation. They point out that Saudi pia has already committed most of its oil nues, and with prices falling, will not find say to cut back to production of 8 million els a day again.

any case, OPEC's attempts at an emery August meeting to reach agreement on ice, and regain "control" of the market, a failure. Not only were the members ble to compromise on a unified price of -36 a barrel, but their subsequent actions wed that the OPEC countries themselves now at the mercy of the market. Two days r the meeting fell apart, Nigeria voluntarlowered its oil price from \$40 to \$36 per rel. It was the largest price reduction an C nation has ever imposed on itself. There indication that prices have hit bottom The golden age of OPEC is over.

low did this sudden reversal occur? There many reasons, but the crucial one—both its timing and its effect—is the Reagan inistration's decision last January to end

e control. t is now possible to examine the related leavals of the 1970s and put them in perctive. The oil crisis was nothing more than elf-inflicted wound. With the exception of months in 1973-74 when the Arab states oped sending oil to the West in retaliation U.S. support of Israel, no event of the 70s that we labeled under the rubric of "the crisis" was anything more than America's usal to pay the proper price for its own It was certainly not an oil-company plot a sign that we were "running out of retrees." Oil was the only commodity in the ire economy that was never freed from esident Nixon's temporary wage and price itrols imposed in 1971. This created an intable gap between supply and demand for mestically produced oil. We bridged it by porting more oil, leaving us vulnerable to the foreign shocks and international ingues that followed.

Here is the way it happened.



HE BECINNING of the oil crisis of the 1970s can be traced to 1968 and the first stirrings of the environmental movement. At the time, though few people remember it, the country was operating under the Oil Import Quota system set up by President Eisenhower in 1959. The policy limited the country's imports to no more than 12 percent of its total consumption. It was honored more in the breach than the observance, however, and imports actually hovered around 19 percent throughout the 1960s.

The original rationale for the quota system was national security. It was argued that if we became too dependent on foreign sources for such an important commodity as oil, we might become vulnerable to cutoffs in time of war or national emergency. The effect of the program. on the other hand, was to give some protection to the small domestic oil companies centered around Texas, Oklahoma, and Louisiana, These are not the oil giants like Exxon, Gulf, Texaco, and the rest of the Seven Sisters. They are the hundreds and hundreds of entrepreneurs who live off small and medium-sized oil holdings -and produce about 60 percent of our own oil. A great deal of the confusion that existed in the early years of the 1970s arose from the failure to distinguish between these small companies and the giants.

The import quotas protected the small companies from the dirt-cheap competition in the Middle East, where oil could be pumped out of the ground for less than ten cents a barrel. Domestic oil was selling at about \$1.90 a barrel in 1969. But even with the import quotas, the price to consumers had been steadily falling over the previous twenty years. The oil giants, on the other hand, were slightly hampered by the import quotas, although they never made too much fuss about it. They were prevented from importing great quantities from the Middle East, but, on the other hand, were afforded some protection for their American holdings. They made money by selling Middle Eastern oil to Europe, and did not press much for abolition of the U.S. import

The trouble began when environmental groups decided that newly discovered low-sulfur oils in North Africa and Indonesia were just what was needed to clean up air pollution. Before Lyndon Johnson left office, environmental groups in California and New York had wrung concessions out of Interior Secretary Stewart Udall (who administered the quota program) to allow more cheap, low-

sulfur crudes to be imported from Libysan Southeast Asia as a substitute for coutility boilers. A number of incentives entireduced, and imports began to rise.

Then an odd thing happened, Consider groups, suddenly aware of all the chear being pumped around the world, began argue that scrapping the import quotas wm produce a consumer bonanza as well. In 1 Ralph Nader's task force on air pollution of the first incarnations of "Nader's Raide" published a book called Vanishing Air, was questioned the "national-security" argum and argued strenuously that ending the oil port-quota program would solve both ronmental and consumer problems. They gested that the quotas were a "protection wall" that "creates a domestic price for troleum substantially in excess of the w price." It was "estimated to cost Amer consumers five to eight billion dollars a ver-

After the Santa Barbara oil spill of 1 created new concerns about offshore drilly the environmentalists' urgings to lift the port quotas became much louder. In 1972 Sierra Club published a book on coal stamining called Stripping, which concluded scrapping the import quotas would cut do on strip-mining, reduce offshore drilling, clu the air, and solve just about every of environmental difficulty. Criticizing a decision of the Nixon administration not to give up equotas, the author, John F. Stacks, wrote:

The scrapping of the import quota tash force recommendation to abolish that system will pile more costs onto the consumer who has already paid more than \$30 billion to subsidize the oil industry through quotas and tax giveaways.

Soon the case for importing more oil we common currency in consumer and environmental circles.

NNOTICED, however, was that the returning point in America's energistuation had already passed. In 19 our domestic oil production peals at 9.6 million barrels a day, after a centure of steady increases. We had run out of "ear oil." Older wells were playing out, and the new oil lay in environmentally troub some areas—offshore, in Alaska, and in deep unexplored regions of the earth's crust. Am icans faced a difficult choice. Either we have to accept a steep rise in American oil prictor pay for the higher costs of drilling a encourage wiser use, or we had to open of doors to more imported oil.

For a long while the Nixon administration sisted making a decision. Task forces were signed to the problem, and most of them me back with the recommendation that we ght as well import more oil. Nixon persony resisted the idea, however. He was still pressed with the national-security arguint, and leery of making the country dendent on foreign imports.

Unfortunately, the courage of this position is obviated by a decision in August 1971 impose an across-the-board temporary wage d price freeze. The controls had an enormal impact on the oil market. Prices should we been climbing rapidly. Production from d wells was leveling off and the development new sources was proving expensive. A clear mal was needed to tell consumers that the me had come to start conserving.

Instead, the price controls seriously disrted the situation. The artificially low price domestic oil discouraged expensive new ploration. But it also allowed consumers to on guzzling oil as if nothing had happened. onsumption rose in 1971-73 at 4 percent er year-a straight-line projection from the d days of falling prices in the 1960s. Nobody pticed that domestic oil was harder to find. And so, in order to make up for this growg gap between domestic supply and demand. e turned to the solution that was to become e characteristic pattern of the entire decade. e imported more oil. The holes that the enronmental movement had already punched the import-quota program made it easy. ll sorts of incentives had been set up allowig refiners bonus quantities of imported crude they cleaned it of sulfur. The program was asily manipulated so that imported crudes ecame the stock for other uses as well. By 973 we were importing close to 30 percent f our oil, an unprecedented foreign depenence. By the time the quotas were scrapped, ney were useless anyway. Without even nocing it, we were at the mercy of world events.

The reason for shortages

HE INEVITABILITY of price controls for the benefit of consumers creating shortages of goods is a cardinal point understood by nearly all economists nd only a handful of members of the public. have searched for a metaphor for this phetomenon, and finally found one in an expeience a friend of mine had in the Peace Corps. He and his colleagues were trying to each Indian village women the rhythm method of birth control by giving them a string of

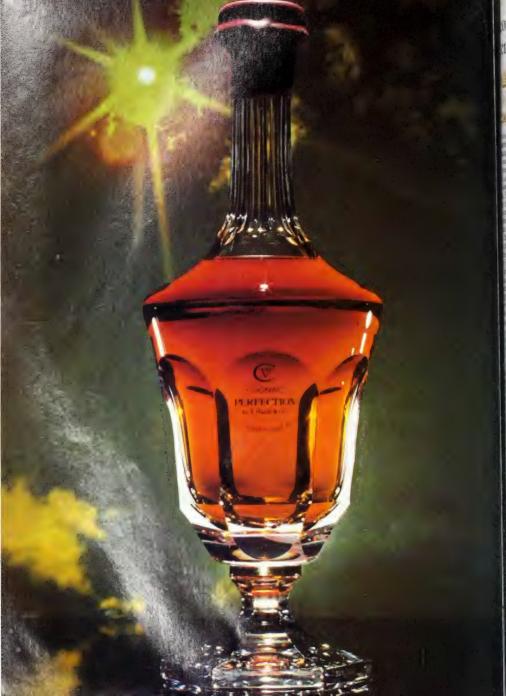
thirty beads that represented the days of their menstrual cycle. The eight days representing their fertile period were marked by red beads in the middle of the month. Each day they were to move one bead, refraining from intercourse on the red days. After a while, however, they found the system didn't work. When the dangerous days of the month arrived, the women would simply move all the red beads across the string at once. They assumed that this act of magic would prevent them from getting pregnant.

We do the same thing with prices. The market price of a commodity is nothing more than a reflection of its scarcity relative to its demand. When goods become harder to obtain, the price goes up. But we assume that by artificially lowering the price-asking the government to intervene with price controls, that is—we can make a good less scarce. Instead, the opposite results. With prices artificially low, consumers try to buy more of the commodity, while suppliers reduce production because they cannot recover their costs. The result is an artificial shortage, where goods are scarcer than at the beginning. Our confusion of reality and its symbols only makes things worse and precipitates what we hoped to avoid.

As President Nixon's 1971 price freeze remained in place, the American economy became increasingly characterized by a series of surpluses and shortages. With prices held at rigid, artificial levels, the gaps between supply and demand became unavoidable. By 1973, steel, concrete, aluminum, and dozens of other basic commodities were becoming unobtainable on the market. The situation coincided with the Club of Rome's jeremiads and the popular conception that we were quickly hitting the bottom of the barrel on resources. Newsweek ran a cover story showing Uncle Sam holding up an empty horn of plenty under the caption RUNNING OUT OF EVERYTHING? Apparently, nobody at Newsweek realized that we were only experiencing the inevitable results of price controls (no one, that is, except Milton Friedman, who continually pointed it out in his columns). But by the middle of 1973 the price controls had been phased out, and these shortages quickly solved themselves.

Oil, however, was an exception. So much pressure had already built up behind the price of oil that Congress became afraid to let the market go where it would. It was obvious that the days of twenty-five cents a gallon for gasoline were over. Yet Congress shunned the cure for America's falling domestic production. Oil became the only exception to the general abandonment of price controls; protection was extended through 1975.

"The artificially low price of domestic oil discouraged expensive new exploration."



## It is not necessarily unreasonable consider paying \$3750.00 for a bottle of cognace on the proper circumstances.



"Wild Bill" Hickok and
"Buffalo Bill" were
racing their horses
for the Pony Express.
Henry Wadsworth
Longfellow had just
written his immortal

Revere's Ride" and Manet's great ainting. Le déjeuner sur l'herbe, was

dizing Paris.

was 1863; the same year Antoine founded his company in Cognac and to accumulate inventories of Grande hampagne, which eventually became ac Perfection; the oldest known ty of unblended cognac in existence. was a happily fortuitous occurrence Monsieur Hardy could not have forehat in a matter of years tragedy would. The phylloxera, a species of lice that s the leaves and roots of grapevines,

destroy virtually all the vineyards of e. So any great wine or cognac made pre-phylloxera era is incredibly presince none will ever again have the

extraordinary qualities.

light up till the destruction of the ards in the late 1870's, the Hardy the continued to accumulate stocks of c and store it in sturdy oaken casks in constant-humidity cellars.

The Hardy oak for Cognac Perfection from the lower trunks of the hard oak Forest of Limousin. The wood was never sawed, in order to preserve atural grain – and then seasoned in ben air to remove the tannic oils.

The action of the Limousin oak and the the dark Hardy cellars over the decpermitted the cognac to soften and ve its incomparable bouquet and taste ts golden color. "The drink of the "wrote Victor Hugo on great cognac. soul of the wime ... etherealized and msed," said another writer.

#### "The angel's portion."

Condensed, alas, is all too accurate the *Perfection* aging process results in dual, but inexorable loss of 1% of the icannually through evaporation. The ht, those incurable romantics, consident lost cognae "the angel's portion."

The discovery of this family cache of ac came almost by accident during a exploration trip through the Charente, at Le Chateau du Vin, were told of Hardy vineyards in Cognac and the res that the family had a small stocke-phylloxera, unblended cognac.

A pre-phylloxera, unblended cognac! old? How did it taste? How much was ?! How had they maintained the quality?

What would it cost?

An important question, since the liquor stry's bible, Grossman's Guide, says the cost of aging cognac for even 50 s is high. "Losses through evaporation e considerable and make selling prices xcessive that even millionaires would be to pay them."

We met with the Hardy family and were assured that yes, they had the unblended, pre-phylloxera cognac and, yes, the quality had been maintained. Each decade, since the beginning, the "family hentiage"—as they called it—was carefully transferred from old oaken casks to seasoned new ones still made the old way to maintain the proper aging process. The company was amenable, Monsieur Jacques Hardy said, to releasing an initial quantity of 1200 bottles while the balance of the cognac, enough for another 3600 bottles, continued to age in the casks.



There will be a major show of Carzou's work in New York in the fall of 1982.

We tasted the cognac. Never had we tasted a cognac so round, so mellow, so soft yet filled with character. The bouquet helped us understand the meaning of "the soul of the wine".

Having discovered what we considered to be the great cognac of the ages, a true work of art, we then considered how best to present this first offering of 1200

bottles to the world.

A cognac so great deserves to be honored in many respects. So we went to a house, as great in its own art as Hardy is in its. We commissioned Cristallarie Daum of Nancy, famous for limited editions of interpretations in crystal of the works of great artists, to design and produce an extraordinary crystal decanter for the world's finest and rarest cognac.

Just as the grape is transformed into Cognac *Perfection* so is great crystal the metamorphosis of glass to a much higher form of substance – different in chemistry, weight, transparency, purity and even sound.

There is a fantastic purity about these specially designed Daum crystal decanters: no defects, no tears, threads, waves or spots. Everything about the crystal is, in a word, perfection.

The cognac was packaged, yet there

was still something lacking: a label. Originally we thought of approaching an artist and asking for a label design. But then it seemed to us there should be a larger role for the artist. Not just a label was needed to accompany the world's great cognac. What was needed was a work which would pay homage to the humble grape and the noble product that issued from it.

### Works of art for a work of art.

We settled on the artist easily: the great French painter, Carzou—winner of the Grand Prix de l'Ille-de-France, the Légion d'Honneur and one of the "immortals" of the Académie Française. He quickly accepted the commission. At the time he was on the verge of a massive retrospective in Paris from July through October of 1981.

Carzou's original work of art—which is 23½" by 35½"—is a signed, numbered and limited edition of 1200. Each bottle of crystal will also be numbered to conform with

the Carzou edition.

The Daum crystal decanter with its precious cargo, and the signed original Carzou will all come in a heavy, handsome silver oak case with brass hinges and a burgundy velvet liner. The oak case itself is numbered with a brass plaque and comes shielded in a special wooden shipping crate.

Each case contains a certificate of authenticity signed by Jacques Hardy, president of A. Hardy and Co., attesting to the age of the cognac, along with supporting certificates from the most respected licensed appraisers in Cognac, all of whom have tasted and vouched for the superb characteristics of *Perfection*.

There is a certificate from Carzou, attesting to the creation of his original work in a limited edition and a certificate from Cristallarie Daum stating that the crystal was created for *Perfection* and will appear in

this limited, numbered edition.

Cognac Perfection is a first offering to the public from Le Chateau du Vin, Inc., a company which is seeking out the finest in wines, champagne and other spirits for future limited offerings for connoisseurs, collectors and investors.

If you wish more information about this rarest of cognacs, please write to



### Le Chateau du Vin, inc.

675 Third Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10017. 1-800-228-2028 Ext. 222

Cognac *Perfection* will be on sale at selected liquor stores throughout the world. This is, indeed, a rare opportunity to taste (and collect) perfection.

Sam Jay Aaron

Marc Platt CHAIRMAN W. L. Tucker
LENERGY
CRISIS
IS OVER

EANWHILE, barely noticed events in the Middle East were beginning to indicate that "cheap foreign oil" wasn't going to remain cheap for very long. In 1969, a colonels' revolt in Libva overthrew the pro-Western monarchy. The new military regime, under Colonel Muammer Oaddafi soon realized it was supplying both Europe and America with low-sulfur oil that could hardly be matched anywhere else in the world. In 1970, the new government imposed a twenty-cent price increase on its concessionaires. The oil companies fussed and fumed but soon realized that there were no American Marines or strategists for the Central Intelligence Agency waiting in the wings to correct the problem. (In the last such incident, which neither the oil companies nor the producing nations had ever forgotten, the attempt by Mohammed Mossadegh to nationalize Îran's oil concessions and impose a price increase on Western consumers had resulted in a coup masterminded by the CIA, and the installation of the shah. On the eye of the Arab oil boycott, President Nixon was still publicly reminding the Middle Eastern states to beware the "lesson of Mossadegh.") Finally, the oil companies accepted the price increase: they had no choice.

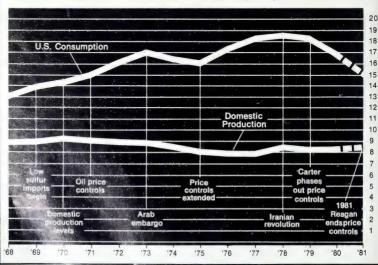
Soon a moribund debating society, the Or-

ganization of Petroleum Exporting Countrifounded in 1960 at the instigation of Verzuelan oil minister Juan Pablo Pérez Alfon, was meeting in earnest in Vienna. By Setember 1973, OPEC members were presentia solid front to the oil companies and negtiating for an across-the-board price increa of fifty-three cents to match Libya's effor The oil companies protested and said it wimpossible. In truth, though, they weren't sur When the negotiations finally broke dow Sheikh Yamani, the Saudi Arabian OPEC mister, said that the producing nations migiust go ahead and do it anyway.

Yet all the while American consumers r mained oblivious. Blinded by the continuir price controls, we went on guzzling gas ever greater amounts as if nothing had had pened. Few people were aware that we wer importing any of our oil, let alone 30 percen British journalist Anthony Sampson, whos book The Seven Sisters describes the even leading up to the boycott, says that an "al of unreality" began to enshroud those Amel ican businessmen and politicians who coul actually see what was happening. In 1972 w set an all-time record for oil consumption and were headed for another in 1973. When several oil companies formed a delegation t try to warn Nixon administration officials of

### **How Price Controls Created the Energy Crisis**

Average consumption of oil in U.S. in millions of barrels per day.



Source: Bureau of the Census, Export and Import Trade Statistics.

growing restiveness in the producing counes, they were politely ignored. On the day eikh Yamani and the OPEC ministers broke negotiations with American oil firms in tober 1973, no American newspaper card the story.

HAT HAPPENED next, of course, is history. The Arabs realized their growing market leverage and exercised it in the oil boyt during the 1973-74 Arab-Israeli War. e result of this deliberate supply interrupn was the first of the "gas shortages."

But the boycott was over by March, and ; lines ended well before that. Far more portant was that the producing nations-to ir surprise-found they had a stranglehold the Western oil market. They quickly raised ces to seven times their 1970 levels, setting motion what was later called "the greatest d swiftest transfer of wealth in history." er the next year, some \$112 billion flowed t of consumers' pockets and into the coffers

the oil-producing nations.

What should we have done? Obviously, we ould have increased domestic production d cut consumption. The formula for this is not really very difficult. Domestic oil price ntrols were already artificially discouraging oduction and stimulating consumption. Getig rid of them would have been the easiest ep of all. Then, had we been really serious, could have done what the Europeans and panese have done for decades and taxed nsumption, particularly consumption of reign oil. This was exactly what President ord tried to do in January 1975, when he gan his state-of-the-union address by asking ongress to abolish price controls and impose two-dollar-a-barrel tax on foreign oil. He omised that reducing imports would be the st priority of the administration. Had the tion been willing to give President Ford a aring, we might have avoided some of the rmoil that followed. Congress, however, had s own ideas.

HE BATTLEGROUND became the 1975 Energy Policy and Conservation Act (a political euphemism if ever there was one). At first, Congress seemed illing to go along with President Ford's asssment: foreign dependence was a problem, ad price controls were only making things orse. But then a suburban rebellion began in le House of Representatives. Congressmen ndrew Maguire (N.J.), Richard Ottinger

(N.Y.), and Toby Moffett (Conn.)—all liberal "Blinded by the Democrats representing the three wealthiest suburban counties in the New York areabegan a campaign to extend oil price controls. Joined by figures such as Edward Kennedy (Dem.-Mass.). Howard Metzenbaum (Dem.-Ohio), James Abdnor (Dem.-S.D.), and Henry Jackson (Dem.-Wash.) in the Senate, these legislators eventually succeeded in getting through a decision to extend price controls all the way through 1979 and possibly beyond. Not only that, the Energy Research and Development Administration was instructed to lower the price of domestic oil in February 1976 in order to punish the oil companies. It was Congress's election-year present to the nation for 1976.

It worked well. Large Democratic majorities were returned to Congress at the end of the year, with a new Democratic president to lead them. Consumers were already celebrating by surging back to big cars, and guzzling gas again as if the boycott had never happened. Everything seemed fine. Yet the oil price controls remained a time bomb ticking away in the American economy. It finally exploded in 1979, and perhaps helped to carry away the Democratic administration with it.

OPEC's short, happy life

EW PEOPLE seem to realize that OPEC's monopoly of the market lasted only about three years. Like any monopoly, it quickly attracted new competition into the field. From 1974 to 1977, the relatively few oil-producing countries probably could have charged any price they wanted to Western consumers. Europe, in particular, had long been accustomed to easy access to Middle Eastern oil, and had few alternatives.

But, as always, the success of a monopoly was also its undoing. The new high price of oil sent geologists scurrying out all over the world looking for new reserves. Britain and Norway developed the fields under the North Sea, the American oil companies were allowed to finish the Alaskan pipeline, and dozens of other small countries began to find and develop deposits. Mexico, it turned out, had had oil all along, but hadn't wanted to reveal its resources for fear of being exploited, as the Arabs had been for decades. In addition, the old patterns of ever increasing consumption were quickly reversed. Yale economist Paul MacAvoy has calculated that OPEC's price distortions only lasted from 1974 to 1977. By that time, the market forces had caught up and supply and demand were back in balance.

continuing price controls. we went on guzzling gas in ever greater amounts as if nothing had happened."

William Tucker THE ENERGY CRISIS IS OVER promoting the wise and efficient use of resources everywhere.

Everywhere, that is, except the United States. Here, unfortunately, events had taken a different turn. Almost from the day in February 1976 when Congress had instructed that the price of domestic oil be lowered, Americans had once again rushed back to their old pre-embargo habits. Over the next twelve months, big-car divisions of the three major auto companies broke sales records in every month of the year. Small cars were left sitting in the lots, and even huge rebate programs failed to win back the public to conservation.

Gasoline consumption also resumed its preembargo climb, surpassing the 1973 record in 1977, and breaking it again in 1978. We were headed for even higher consumption in 1979, until events in Iran put a stop to it. Domestic producers, on the other hand, could not begin to hope to make back their money from drilling for new oil. They sat on their hands or put their money into real estate. Once again there was a shortage of domestic oil. And yet there was no time between 1976 and 1979 that motorists couldn't get gas. How did we do it? The answer is the same. We made up for our self-inflicted domestic shortages by importing still more oil. From the crack of the gun in February 1976, our imports once again took off, climbing from 33 percent to almost 50 percent by mid-1979. In fact, it's a good thing the Iranian revolution happened when it did. Had things gone on any longer, the eventual crash, whatever form it took, would have been far worse,

Just about everything Congress did to solve the energy crisis in the 1970s was aimed at one thing—keeping cheap gas flowing to the consumers. Washington was filled with liberal congressmen singing the joys of conservation and wringing their hands about foreign dependence. Yet not one of them was ever willing to accept the simple formula that would have ended the whole dilemma—paying a market price for our own oil.

T Is COMMONLY assumed that the events in Iran and the second "gas shortages" in 1979 finally curbed the nation's appetite for foreign oil. That is not quite correct. Redoubled international oil prices and the resulting rise in the cost of gasoline certainly reminded people of the realities of the world oil situation. But the effect would probably have been temporary once again, had not the second gas shortage finally convinced President Carter that domestic price controls were

a self-defeating policy and should be abdoned. Carter bravely announced in late 199 that he would phase out price controls by the fall of 1981

Incredibly, even at this late date, congressmen howled, and consumer groups moand that the president was abandoning his apparationstitutional responsibility to provide Amicans with cheap energy. Yet the payoff callows immediately. Within one year, U.S. imports fell by 25 percent, back to their 19 level.

Oil drilling increased as never before (although oil is still getting harder to find and consumers finally began demonstratinhitherto unsuspected capabilities for conserving energy. President Reagan's January decision which accelerated Carter's schedule by nit months, only completed the process. Drilling for new oil has increased by 50 percent the last six months. Consumption has dropped another 20 percent. Domestic oil production is holding steady, and consumers—finally deprived of the "protection" of Congress—see permanently, set on a conservation course.

The unanticipated—though predictableresult of this new realism has been that energ prices are now falling on the world marke Throughout the 1970s, our energy policy wa to prop up world oil prices by creating domestic shortage and then making up for by buying in the world market. Without of support, OPEC would have been defunct h 1977. Now it is falling apart anyway. Ame icans are buying 2.2 million barrels a day les than we were before President Carter launche the repeal of the price controls in 1979. Th is the exact amount of the current world glu Left to the mercies of supply and demand OPEC is finding it can do nothing more that set its prices where the market tells it to.

### The Seven (weak) Sister

RE WE REALLY out of the woods? Per haps not entirely. We still import justover 30 percent of our oil, which is about where we were in 1973 just to put a modest tax on imported oil—perhap two dollars a barrel—in order to pay the cost of building a strategic petroleum reserve; this would be a fair measure of the risks we incustly importing some of our oil. Both Europ and Japan have long used high government taxes to discourage consumption, which is why they were much less affected by the Iranian events than we were, even though they import nearly all their oil.

Yet all these wise and conscientious meares would still have to run the gauntlet of ortsighted "consumer protectors." There e still enough Toby Moffetts and Edward mnedys in Washington to put on a magic ow of preaching conservation with one hand ile subsidizing consumption with the other.

HERE DO the oil companies fit into all this? Those Enemies of the People, of course, were the favorite whipping boys of the id-1970s. By 1975 it probably didn't seem bad guess to predict that they would have en nationalized within a few years. It is sy enough now to see what happened to the I companies in the 1970s, and why we hated em so much. The problem was that the oil mpanies were getting weaker. During the 150s and '60s, they had bullied their way rough the producing countries, robbing them r the benefit of Europeans and Americans id bringing home the goods at ridiculously w prices. When things got difficult, there ere always the Marines and the CIA to hold our interests.

But in the 1970s all that changed. The oil impanies found themselves up against a more mly knit cartel with better control over the sources than they had. What could we do it hate them? They had failed us miserably. s Eric Hoffer said of revolutions, it is usuly when the public feels the government eakening that it expresses all its hidden rentments.

The oil companies have now lost their preninence in world trade. In 1970 they haned over 90 percent of the transactions beveen the producing and consuming countries. ow they handle only about 40 percent. More and more, the consuming countries are dealig directly with the producers. In addition, ie OPEC nations are building their own rening operations, buying tankers, and moving downstream" in the oil business.

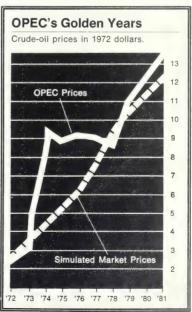
The future for the oil companies, of course, not bleak. The value of their remaining oil esources has increased enormously. Their prots have risen by 20 percent per year since 973. They are still the world's specialists in xploration and drilling technology. In addion, they are diversifying into other fields nd energy technologies. They will probably o as they have always done—quite well.

Is the energy crisis over, then? Not quite. Infortunately, we still have a forty-year-old angover to deal with-the chaotic state of esources, created by government intervention n the natural-gas industry.

The havor is almost too complicated to de- "The unanticilineate. (For an excellent account, read Tom Bethell's article "The Gas Price Fixers," Harper's, June 1979.) Price controls were originally imposed in 1938 because of a supposed "monopoly." Actually, there was no monopoly at all. Consumers had a choice of several other fuels, and gas drilling is one of the most decentralized industries in the country. One out of every two hundred Americans owns interest in a natural-gas well.

In 1954, one producer tried to raise the price of gas from three to four cents a thousand cubic feet. This ridiculously low price had originally been granted only as an open invitation for the pipeline companies to build their connections into the oil fields. Before that, the producers had flared off their gas as a waste product of oil drilling. But a Wisconsin state consumer authority, reacting to this insignificant price increase, forced the Federal Power Commission to extend its control back to the wellhead price as well. The decision was upheld in the courts, and Congress has never mustered the will to change it.

The results have been utterly perverse. The natural-gas industry became a kind of national utility company. No one was ever encouraged to go out and find more. The only gas we have used is the "waste product" now pated—though predictableresult of this new realism has been that energy prices are now falling on the world market."



Source: Department of Energy

William Tucker THE ENERGY CRISIS IS OVER associated with oil deposits. Yet all indications now are that there are staggering amounts of natural gas—perhaps as much as 200 years' supply at current prices—in different kinds of formations in the earth.

The situation finally reached a crisis with the "natural-gas shortages" of the winter of 1977. These "shortages," again, were nothing but the result of price controls. The law had never extended federal control over pricing within the producing states themselves. By 1977, gas prices in the intrastate market were four times the price in the interstate market. Most producing states, like Texas, Louisiana, and Oklahoma, which collect large royalties, simply refused to send any more gas north, where consumers were still paying 1960s prices; hence the shortages.

The hopelessness of government efforts to anticipate market prices can be seen in the 1978 Natural Gas Policy Act, which at the time was perceived as a victory over the consumer advocates. Toby Moffett and the gasguzzling suburbanites once again tried to ensure their constituents cheap energy at other people's expense. They failed, in that the Carter administration finally decided on a phased program ending in complete decontrol in 1985. It is said that when the vote against continuing price controls was finally taken, Representative Moffett left the House, fell against a tree, and wept.

He could have saved his tears. Congress, in its wisdom, decided to anticipate the future by allowing natural-gas prices to rise to the 1978 level of oil prices—equivalent to \$15 a barrel—by 1985. Then they could go where they would. Yet in less than a year that price was already hopelessly out of date. Taking inflation into account, natural-gas consumers are once again paying 1960s prices for energy. (Because of the resulting shortages, industry and utilities are rapidly being squeezed out of the market, and consumption of natural gas is now concentrated almost entirely in home heating.)

The results have been chaos. Congress allowed that all gas found below 15,000 feet could be free from price controls. Previously, most gas had been found at 5,000 feet. This spurred new exploration, which started turning up gas reserves no one had ever dreamed possible. It is now clear that there are probably huge reserves between 5,000 and 15,000 feet as well.

But the owners of gas deposits below 15,000 feet have now become opponents of decontrol. They fear that they will be undersold by all the gas that obviously exists between 5,000 and 15,000 feet. This doesn't promise a very orderly development of resources. In a final

irony, the pipeline owners themselves he become a principal opponent of deregulation. They are paid according to the amount of gethat flows through their pipelines. They fequite reasonably, that if prices are decentrolled, people will start conserving gas. The will cut down on their pipeline transmission and lose them money. Thus, as always, are regulated have ended up falling in love witheir regulations.

There are already fears that when 19 arrives Congress will find decontrolling the price of natural gas intolerable. Yet there hardly any choice. In fact, removing procentrols right now—as the Reagan administration is beginning to propose—would even easier. There is no time like the presence of getting rid of price controls. The medicing would be only slightly harder to swallow the our current decontrol of oil prices, which per support of the property of the proposed of the property of the

ple have hardly noticed at all.

The only alternative is that natural gas we be a resource that we simply don't use. On again one may ask: if we are creating an ficial shortages by controlling the price of na ural gas, where are we making them up? All once again, the answer is the same. We a importing more oil. It is estimated that h tween one and two million barrels per day our current oil imports are the result of o failure to use our own natural gas. The su sidy of natural-gas consumers is also delaying the introduction of rooftop solar energy. D control would unquestionably mean high natural-gas prices, but this would quickly neutralized by a further drop in the price oil and the introduction of new technologic People are never going to conserve, or us solar energy in home heating, as long as the are paying fifteen-year-old prices for natur

But without the foreign oil needed make up for the natural-gas shortage, OPE would be about as important to the America economy as a Turkish bazaar.

We have ended OPEC's dominance the market within a few short montly by swallowing what turned out to la relatively mild pill and accepting a mark price for our own oil. All we have to do no is decontrol our natural-gas prices, and we who home free. There will be another mild priod of adjustment, and soon we will be on firm, stable, and innovative energy course.

Are we up to it? Can Americans tackle th

energy problems of the 1980s?

Stay tuned.

HARPER'S NOVEMBER 1981 'My job is managing chemical industry wastes. What I do helps make the environment safer today-and for generations to come."



Sandra Newman, Manufacturing Superintendent, Environmental Control, for a major chemical company, with her daughter Candy.

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## JOURNEY'S END

Nirvana on five dollars a day

by Paul Fusse

WHILE ago my wife and I were touring Israel, One morning in Jerusalem I woke with an inexplicable, insistent pain in my side: I felt as if during the night someone had kicked me in the ribs very hard. But the pain wasn't bad enough to interfere with our touring schedule for the day. which involved an overnight bus trip to the northern part of the country, including the Sea of Galilee and the Golan Heights, and a stay at a kibbutz that runs a motel and restaurant. At dinner that night my pain worsened, and now I found it hard to breathe. I assumed that somehow I'd broken a rib or pulled a muscle humping our heavy suitcases. A possible alternative explanation was that my years of winebibbing had finally paid off in a monstrously swollen liver, which was now obtruding into my

rib cage. I couldn't see the kibbutz physicia because he was on vacation. The solution my problem, it was indicated, was an exar ination at a hospital some thirty miles away taxi took us there—by this time I was groating and thrashing about in the backseat—an within an hour I was scrutinized, thumped X-rayed, and, encased in blue pajamas may of some canvaslike material, installed in a bein a ward. I hurt like hell. For no reason all, I had achieved a severe case of pleurisy I would recover, I was told, but the treatmen would take two weeks. And after that, I was warned, I would have to convalesce somewher for an additional week.

Somewhere. "Where do you want to go? my wife asked when I was ready to leave th hospital. Where indeed did we want to spen a week?

The world was all before them, where to choose Their place of rest, and Providence their guide.

I could have said I wanted to go to Baden Baden or a Greek island or Juan-les-Pins, o even Oaxaca or Tahiti. Then I realized wher I wanted to go.

WANTED to go to a certain small provincial European city on a large lake. The population is about 80,000. A Romance language is spoken there, and the prevailing religion is Roman Catholic in a serious but never solemn way—lots of processions and frequent public blessings of objects like fishing boats and municipal vehicles. Everyone greets the priests in the streets, and the priests (who wear soutanes and birettas and never

Contributing editor Paul Fussell's latest book, Abroad: British Literary Traveling Between the Wars, was published last fall by Oxford University Press.



oke cigarettes in public) smile back, Almost ry week there is a fête celebrating some it's day. This begins at dawn with a great oing explosion from the eighteenth-century non on the lakefront, proceeds through a of municipal sports programs accompad by many drinks, and ends with fireworks r the lake at night, with tired children, unlingness of friends to part, and universal sfaction that the day has been spent so I. On this day the police all wear white ves, and as you walk home you smell toco, wine, coffee, and flowers.

Events like that take place near the town ter, laid out as a vertical oval sloping slightuphill, one and a half kilometers from the el at the bottom, on the lake, to the muipal building at the top. The architecture e actually dates from the last third of the eteenth century, but the style is Palladian Romanesque or Baroque, A gently curving in street encloses the central grassed oval itaining a large fountain, never out of orand lighted at night; statues on pedestals, ne classical nudes, some fully dressed local rthies of the last century such as doctors, nposers, and minor authors; curving walks th green slatted wood benches where the lerly rest and admire the beds of red flowers ainst the grass; and, in the center, a covered ndstand with a wrought-iron railing around featuring lyres. Around the bandstand are ndreds of quite comfortable folding chairs, d from it, twice weekly (Wednesday eve-1gs, Sunday afternoons), issue three hours band music, such as Poet and Peasant overre, "Waltz" from The Merry Widow, and the anvil Chorus" from Il Trovatore, with real vils sending up real sparks when struck with mmers by members of the percussion secn. The band, supported by the city, has astered the complete oeuvres of Romberg d Sousa and Strauss, with the result that if u stay a week you never hear the same section played twice.

On the main street, around this oval central rk, there is no building taller than three ories, and the ground floors are occupied by ops, restaurants of all categories, and cafés. ne shops sell no cameras or electronic equipent, they sell no would-be comic T-shirts, no caine or marital aids. They sell good-lookg clothes and luggage and fine small leathgoods, chess sets and interesting playing ards and dice beautifully machined, antique welry and chrome-plated corkscrews that ork, snuffboxes and good sandals and surprisg things made of marzipan, like little pork lops and slices of salami. There are many ookshops carrying works in the local language as well as stationery and school texts. "The shops sell But there's one shop that stocks all the Penguins and Pelicans, and in addition has all the volumes of Everyman's Library, the Modern Library, and the World's Classics as they existed in 1949.

ACH restaurant, whether modest or grand, posts a menu outside, and it is lighted at night. Because the provision of public music is regarded by the municipality as one of its prerogatives and a public trust, mere street musicians are prohibited, and the playing of music inside restaurants, whether by the living or on record or tape, violates a city ordinance that is rigorously enforced. Although the town is neither in northern Italy nor anywhere in France, the food is a combination of northern Italian and French. You can have prosciutto e melone and fettucine al burro, and you can also have truffes en croûte, poulet à l'estragon, or trout from the lake, and finish with a soufflé Grand Marnier, And there's a nice, slightly sparkling local white wine. The waiter, who would rather die than say something like "Good evening. I am your waiter. My name is Dimitri," leaves the wine in a bucket by your table, assuming that you will want to pour it yourself. After dinner you stroll out to a café, where you have coffee and cognac and perhaps a little pastry or ice cream and watch the young people go by, some slowly in cars, some on foot, but all very attractive and all, boys and girls alike, wearing white trousers. They seem happy. If café musicians are prohibited, lottery-ticket sellers, shoeshine boys, and itinerant peanut venders are allowed, but they are a very nice type who smile and go away immediately when you shake your head ever so slightly.

It is at the café, especially, that you would do well to master the local currency and coinage. You get four of the monetary units to the dollar. Coffee at the café costs half a unit. beer two, the wine in the restaurant four or five, depending on whether it's 1976 (a nice year) or 1978 (a not so nice one). A large, satisfying meal costs about 18 units. The coins are cupro-nickel all the way through and of satisfying and even comic design, like the Irish. And the sizes make sense: for example, the "nickel" is not twice the size of the "dime." The banknotes reveal their value instantly by being of different sizes and colors, like the French. There is a 15 percent service charge everywhere. You leave a tiny tip over that only when the waiter has told you something really funny (and funny by international standards) or the chambermaid in the hotel has flirted

no cameras or electronic equipment. they sell no would-be comic T-shirts, no cocaine or marital aids."



Paul Fussell JOURNEY'S END

with you. You also might leave a small tip (an eighth of a unit would do it) with the attendant always on duty at the impeccably tidy public conveniences in the center of the park. (A man once tried to make a pass at another man there, but he was summarily deported. and there's been no trouble of that kind for vears.) From the café vou can see the taxi stand, with four or five cabs always waiting, They are built on the British model, with lots of room and so tall that you look not only out but down. They have entirely trustworthy meters, and the driver will expect a tip only if. when the ride ends, he jumps out and opens your door, or carries suitcases into the hotel. Here and there you find kiosks on corners: they sell tobacco and matches and combs and papers of pins and soap, and postage stamps so tastefully designed you hate to mail them away. The kiosks also stock newspapers, weekly journals of opinion, and illustrated magazines from all over. You can stroll slowly around the whole central oval in less than an hour, sampling the various cafés and making small purchases. In the daytime you are likely to pass or be passed by a crocodile of schoolchildren in blue and white carrying little briefcases. A teacher or nun is at the head, and while she's leading them in public, the pupils conduct themselves with the dignity appropriate to learning. When you go down to the lakefront, you will often see fishermen in vivid little boats, wearing their traditional outfits. including long knitted caps with tassels, like the Portuguese.

HE GLORY of this city is its hotel on the lake. The citizens are proud of it, and they like the people who come there. This is where I'm going to get my strength back. Architecturally, the hotel resembles a large British country house dating from the early part of the nineteenth century. Outside, stucco and stone, roofed patios with Palladian balustrades, ferns, and hanging baskets. Inside, the atmosphere is that of a wellrun London club of sixty years ago. There are public rooms for specialized purposes: billiard- and card-playing, letter-writing, reading. Downstairs there is a cigar stand that sells cigars. When you arrive the people at the reception desk are not engaged at the telephone.

The elevator closes with a sliding bronze gate finished in faded gilt, and there is a small upholstered bench to sit on. There is no piped music for the same reason there is none in the restaurants. Your room will have flowers and fruit in it, as well as a small sewing kit. When you look into the bathroom, you will find a

tub over six feet long. It is made of porcella Above it is a small clothesline. There remore towels and soap than you will need ad two extra rolls of toilet paper. The bed is duble and the two reading lamps are fitted vib hundred-watt bulbs. The closets contain an cess of stealable broad wooden hangers, while the guests do not steal. In the guest rook as everywhere in the hotel, there is molding at the junctions of walls and ceilings, and the are molded panels (six or eight) on the do which are of oak or a similar hardwood. D fittings are of brass, and the doorknobs has things like lion heads in bas relief. A seal of the bedside-table drawers will reveal Bible, the management entertaining sufficial respect for its clientele to let it select its of reading matter without suggestions clies might find impertinent or, if Moslem or Hina provincial, impious, and offensive.

When you go down for drinks and dinry you will find everything nicely arranged in the convenience of the guests rather than a staff. Drinks can be had immediately on ay one of the covered patios by sitting at one if the low tables and simply ringing the lite bell. With the drinks arrive, unfailingly, salt peanuts and sometimes the splendid local ptato chips and olives. After 5 P.M. one is fered tiny hot hors d'oeuvre, such as midal weenies in blankets made of memorable crul

The hotel restaurant: thick white tablecloss and twenty-four-inch napkins at every me including breakfast. Flowers on the table ways. The cutlery is heavy nickel silver, to waiters aged and serious. They wear black as white. You are hardly seated at breakfast lefore someone arrives to pour coffee or ten the bread and rolls are superb.

On the beach side of the hotel there is

simpler restaurant with light meals and snac at all hours and a bar with waiters who, wil the greatest good humor, will bring things your place on the beach. There is no sign of the beach prohibiting anything. When yo look across the lake you look not upon em tiness but at boats and, far away, the dim on lines of the distant other shore with light-bli mountains rising behind. While you're he the weather is bright and clear, warm in the

This is the place where I wanted to go trecuperate. But we did not go there. After day or two in Tel Aviv, which resembles the place in no respect. I felt perfectly well, an

daytime but at night cool enough for god

day or two in Tel Aviv, which resembles th place in no respect, I felt perfectly well, an we resumed our trip and flew on to Centre Europe. And by the time we returned to th United States, this place was only a memory. [



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## SHREDS OF EVIDENCE

Science confronts the miraculous—the Shroud of Turin

by Cullen Murphy

HE COMMUNITY of Los Alamos crowns a vast, flat-topped mesa northwest of Santa Fe, New Mexico, and from the air the configuration resembles a left hand in bas relief, with its dozen fingers and swollen thumb groping out from the rim of the Jemez Caldera, a volcanic basin formed a million years ago.

From pinky to index finger Los Alamos (est. 1943) is a Potemkin Pleasantville, the kind of town where, in espionage novels, the Soviets train their agents to behave like Americans. There is one college, one library, one bowling alley, one ski area, one church for every major denomination (twenty-six in all),



courts, eighteen parks, twenty-six basebal diamonds, thirty doctors, 220 motel rooms 1,100 Ph.D.'s, and an unemployment rate o 3 percent.

Hemmed in by Indian lands and state parks. Los Alamos is a suburb in the wilderness where coyote can still wander into town and carry off chemist Ray Rogers's pet cats. High above the split-level homes, where the mesa's "wrist" melds seamlessly into the circular Jemez range, stands of aspen lurk anony-

one golf course, one weekly and one dail

newspaper, one radio station, one airport, and

since 1960, when the need finally arose, on

cemetery. There are two museums, five shop

ping centers, seven membership swimming

pools, eleven playgrounds, seventeen tenni

unmask the carotenoids, turning the leaves a brilliant vellow.

Los Álamos is the bedroom of the Los Alamos National Laboratory, one of the nation's premier weapons and energy research facilities, and the womb of Little Boy (which exploded over Hiroshima on August 6, 1945) and Fat Man (which destroyed Nagasaki three days later). Nuclear warheads for the cruise missile, the Minuteman III, and the MX mis-

mously among piñons and ponderosas, until the chill of autumn dilutes the chlorophyll to

The crossed hands of the "man of the shroud" as they begin to emerge in 3-D on the CRT display of a VP-8 Image disease.

e were all conceived and designed here. til 1957, the town was fenced in and off nits to the public. Older residents still use expression "behind the gates" to demarte their tidy hilltop world from everything at is "down in the valley.

The lab, with its 126 buildings and scattered plosive testing sites sequestered deep in box nyons, occupies the mesa's severed thumb. is linked to the mainland by a trestle bridge er which 7,100 people, most of them men, ive to their jobs every morning. A model of it Man, freshly painted, is displayed promintly on the laboratory grounds, and at that ot the mesa is 7,386.49 feet above sea level. our roads scavenged from cliffsides of volnic Bandelier Tuff run off the mesa top and uirm along the fingers, then plunge 1,000 et to the Rio Grande, which meanders slugshly among other pueblos and olive scrub, d sustains the cottonwoods along its banks at give los alamos its name.

The terrain is reminiscent of Palestine, a nd God made when He ran out of color and Il back, inspired, on sheer texture and conast. The penitentes, a flagellant Spanish sect nose adherents seek to inflict on themselves e torments endured by Jesus Christ, remain oradically active here, their rituals oddly rmane to some of the work pursued by lab-

atory personnel.

No mention of that work will be found in e lab's \$420 million 1981 budget, or in any ingressional testimony, but the 5.81 x 1012 t memory of the Los Alamos central comiter system would probably yield up a clue two. A few more fragments of information ould, perhaps, be teased out of the adhesive some chemically inert, pure hydrocarbon pe (manufactured on request by the 3M ompany) or deduced from the high-resoluon radiographs in physicist Don Janney's fice safe. In the files of several Los Alamos searchers there are references to negotiaons with Umberto II of Savoy, King of Italy ntil 1946, and now, at his leisure, pretender

More suggestive is the piquant behavior of cientific American, vol. 156, no. 3 (1937), the os Alamos copy of which falls open, its bindig trained, to an article on the Shroud of urin, potentially the most sacred and long ne most controversial relic in Christendom. : was the last time the magazine gave ediorial recognition to the subject, and physical hemist Bob Dinegar refers to the volume from me to time, much as a Supreme Court jusce might, on occasion, consult the U.S. onstitution.

The Shroud of Turin is purported to be the

burial garment of Jesus Christ, the linen His "The attitude of friend Mary Magdalene discovered in a rockhewn tomb on Easter Sunday, three days after Christ's unwashed remains, glistening with blood and urea, the muscles frozen in rigor mortis, were laid to rest. The relic is represented synecdochally at Los Alamos by hundreds of tiny "microfibrils" lifted off the linen, and by a dozen small threads, which are stored in Ray Rogers's office safe when they are not being studied under the microscope or assaulted by chemicals. The threads, individually preserved in half-gram, screw-top glass vials, range in length from five to twelve millimeters. In their dust-free receptacles, they resemble chromosomes on display at a boutique for genetic engineers. Like chromosomes, the threads harbor the essence of an identity.

many scientists toward the efforts of the Shroud of Turin Research Project is one of cynicism."

OR THE PAST three years, this case of identity has absorbed the spare time of the thirty men and women associated with the Shroud of Turin Research Project, Inc. (STURP). With respect to the hereafter the group is an ecumenical one-among its members are Baptists, Lutherans, Mormons, Episcopalians, Jews, Roman Catholics, and agnostics-but to an observer of purely secular bent STURP would appear rather homogeneous in several respects.

Its members are, with few exceptions, professional scientists, engineers, and photographers. The great majority of them are, or until recently were, engaged in the design, manufacture, or testing of weapons, from simple explosives to atomic bombs to high-energy "killer" lasers. Originally, about half of the team lived in New Mexico, an accident of geography: John Jackson and Eric Jumper, STURP's coordinators, happened to be posted at the Air Force Weapons Laboratory in Albuquerque when they informally launched the organization in 1976.

The biggest single bloc works at Los Alamos and a few of the others, like retired air force captain Joe Acetta, are alumni. Some have jobs at such Los Alamos spinoffs as Sandia National Laboratories. The remainder, for the most part, man scientific stations at various outposts of the military-industrial complex throughout the Sunbelt: the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, the Santa Barbara Research Center, Lockheed Missiles and Space. The organization comprises, in addition, a far-flung network of consulting specialists, such as Robert Bucklin, deputy medical examiner for Los Angeles County, and Joseph Gambescia, chairman of medicine at Philadelphia's St. Agnes Medical Center.

Cullen Murphy is senior editor of The Wilson Quarterly.

Among the many things STURP members share, including a propinquity to fallout shelters, and to typewriters that can say  ${}^{\circ}S_1 (\times)^2$   $\delta/\lambda [\times^3 + {}^1/\gamma]_{\epsilon} = \beta$ , is a driving sense of curiosity and the acquired technical skills to satisfy it. They will bite at anything.

Don Janney, for example, at the request of scholars who are attempting to verify New Mexico's master dendrochronology back to the year 1000 A.D., developed a computerized method of tree-ring counting that can establish whether two adjacent rings were formed during two separate years or during two distinct wet periods within a single year, Roger Morris, Ron London, and Larry Schwalbe. who work with Janney, have been commissioned by scholarly and legal authorities to identify, with the aid of X-ray fluorescence, the composition of ancient clay pots, the provenance of Indian turquoise necklaces, and the age of paintings involved in a tax-fraud case. Ray Rogers is an accomplished archeologist. John Heller, who helped analyze the "blood" areas on the shroud, is an authority on the history of pencils.

Each member of the Shroud of Turin Research Project is sure of his craft; each is, as one of them put it, something of a prima donna in his field, or headed that way. None of them has a professional stake in the investigation. They are simply dogged personalities. cursed with a passion, akin to dipsomania, for puzzles, and unwilling, by and large, to concede that any problem can stump them for long. The attitude of many of these scientists toward the central question posed by the Shroud of Turin-is it real or isn't it?-was well expressed by Ray Rogers when he joined the team: "Give me twenty minutes and I'll have this thing shot full of holes." The minutes have become years.

The burden of proof

HE SHROUD OF TURIN, or Santa Sindone, is a 435-centimeter-by-110-centimeter-by-345-micron strip of linen—equivalent to two dining-room table-cloths laid end to end. Of unproven antiquity, it has been lodged in a silver casket, high above the main altar of the Capella della Santa Sindone in Turin's Duomo San Giovanni, since 1694. It has been somewhere in Turin for 503 years (except during World War II, when it was hidden in Avellino), and for more than six centuries it has been revered by many Christians as the "burial clothes" mentioned in the Gospels.

The basis for this belief is that the shroud,

as skeptics concede, bears on its surface to faint but unmistakable ventral and dord images of a crucified man. Unlike the "face f Christ" that appeared in 1978 on the surfact of a hardening tortilla in Fort Arthur, No Mexico, the figure on the shroud requires the aid of neither good will nor bad liquor to a discerned.

There are two head-to-head images on the shroud, as if a man had been laid on one end of a long strip of cloth with the remained drawn over his head to cover the front of hody. The image is sepia in color, the natural hue of aged linen, and the marks referred as "bloodstains"—STURP members make ar ple use of qualifying quotation marks in prin and of functionally comparable verbal tics

speech-are a deep burgundy. Dr. Robert Bucklin, who resembles uncar nily (some say deliberately) what STURP scien tists call "the man of the shroud," has est mated the victim's height at 181 centimeter and his mass at seventy-seven kilograms, about the size of former president Jimmy Carte before he started jogging. There are "na marks" in his wrists and feet, a "lance wound on the left side of the chest, rivulets of "blood about the head akin to what might be made be a "crown of thorns," and the wounds of a apparent scourging on the man's back an legs. The image appears only on one side a the cloth, but the isolated "bloodstains" hav. soaked through. Anatomically and biblically the effect is correct in every detail.

What is at issue is how the image got there Are we dealing with a miracle? A chance nat ural occurrence? A clever medieval forgery Every side has its partisans, and the Roman Catholic Church, legal custodian of the relic has for more than six hundred years stead fastly refused to render its own official verdict or, by and large, to help scientists render theirs. From Clement VII onward, successive popes, whatever their personal opinion, have publicly been cautious in their pronounce ments. For a 1973 television broadcast, Pope Paul VI chose his words carefully. He ob served that the shroud "appeared to me so true, so profound, so human, so divine" but deferred to "whatever may be the historical and scientific judgment that learned scholars will express."

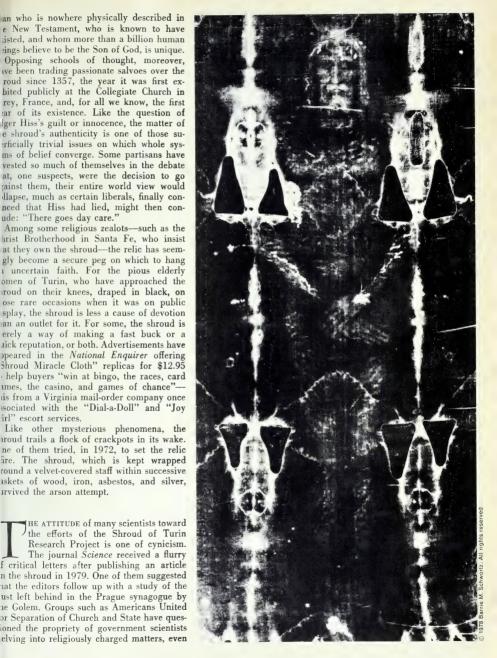
The issue would ordinarily be an academic one. Thousands of relics vie for attention within the churches of the Roman communion, from pieces of the True Cross to vials of saintly blood to wizened bits of hallowed anatomy, including what is purported to be Christ's foreskin. But the Shroud of Turin, which bears what may be a "snapshot" of a

The shroud in its natural state is a photographic negative yielding, in the form of a photographic negative, a positive. Where the actual image on the cloth appears dark against a light background, the negative image, light against dark, reveals a lifelike form of startting clarity. an who is nowhere physically described in e New Testament, who is known to have isted, and whom more than a billion human sings believe to be the Son of God, is unique. Opposing schools of thought, moreover, we been trading passionate salvoes over the roud since 1357, the year it was first exbited publicly at the Collegiate Church in rev, France, and, for all we know, the first ar of its existence. Like the question of lger Hiss's guilt or innocence, the matter of e shroud's authenticity is one of those suerficially trivial issues on which whole sysms of belief converge. Some partisans have vested so much of themselves in the debate at, one suspects, were the decision to go rainst them, their entire world view would llapse, much as certain liberals, finally connced that Hiss had lied, might then conude: "There goes day care."

Among some religious zealots-such as the hrist Brotherhood in Santa Fe, who insist at they own the shroud-the relic has seemgly become a secure peg on which to hang uncertain faith. For the pious elderly omen of Turin, who have approached the roud on their knees, draped in black, on ose rare occasions when it was on public splay, the shroud is less a cause of devotion an an outlet for it. For some, the shroud is erely a way of making a fast buck or a rick reputation, or both. Advertisements have peared in the National Enquirer offering Shroud Miracle Cloth" replicas for \$12.95 help buyers "win at bingo, the races, card imes, the casino, and games of chance"is from a Virginia mail-order company once ssociated with the "Dial-a-Doll" and "Joy irl" escort services.

Like other mysterious phenomena, the roud trails a flock of crackpots in its wake. ne of them tried, in 1972, to set the relic are. The shroud, which is kept wrapped round a velvet-covered staff within successive askets of wood, iron, asbestos, and silver, irvived the arson attempt.

HE ATTITUDE of many scientists toward the efforts of the Shroud of Turin Research Project is one of cynicism. The journal Science received a flurry f critical letters after publishing an article n the shroud in 1979. One of them suggested at the editors follow up with a study of the ust left behind in the Prague synagogue by ne Golem. Groups such as Americans United or Separation of Church and State have quesioned the propriety of government scientists



on their own time and with their own money.\* Los Alamos officials pointedly disavow any formal connection with STURP. "Let me point out," wrote John C. Armistead, one of the lab's public-information officers, in response to a query, "that the Los Alamos National Laboratory is not the official voice of the shroud research team."

STURP's mission is further complicated by the fact that the question of authenticity is loaded in one direction. Theoretically as well as practically, there is no scientific way to prove that the shroud is what it is alleged to be. Even if it is shown to be a burial garment of correct age, who is to say that it covered Christ and not, say, the Good Thief? By contrast, there may be an infinite number of ways to prove that the shroud is a fake.

The cloth might turn out, say, to have been manufactured in Ghent in 1343. The image may be shown to have been painted with Winsor Newton Alizarin Crimson No. 301 by an artist using a sable No. 4, series 7 brush. A Burlington Mills label might be discovered under one of the thirty-one patches with which Holy Clare nuns mended the shroud in 1532 after it was damaged by an accidental fire at Chambéry, its home before Turin. "People have a great capacity for thinking up peculiar things," says Ray Rogers. "That's what makes people so wonderful."

Theories abound as to how the shroud could have been concocted, and STURP is forever testing new ones, if only to keep the project fun. Should some member be seduced by the

\*STURP members, particularly those on a government payroll, or whose work depends on public money, have been fastidious in keeping their professional and spare-time activities separate. The only serious charge of conflict was brought against John Heller, chairman of the financially troubled New England Institute. Last March, the State of Connecticut took the Institute's directors to court, alleging that public contributions for cancer research had been misused. The state specifically cited Heller's work on the Shroud of Turin. Heller denied the allegations, and Danbury Superior Court judge Howard J. Moraghan ruled in his fayor.

STURP's money has come from lecture fees, a newsletter, tax-deductible gifts from interested individuals, and a substantial subvention from De Rance. Inc., a Milwaukee-based foundation. Cash outlays thus far total \$250,000. STURP's resources don't always show on Tom D'Muhala's ledgers, however. (D'Muhala, president of a Connecticut company called NUTEK, is the organization's business manager.) Such corporations as Kodak, Tektronix, and 3M have loaned or donated scientific equipment worth \$1 million. STURP members have logged about 100,000 hours of unreimbursed research time, and they have all incurred out-of-pocket expenses, ranging from hundreds to thousands of dollars. STURP has resisted, as tawdry, a financial windfall in the form of an offer from the musical Osmond family to produce a "docudrama" on its work.

notion that the image was formed by an esive combination of butter, lemon, and egyolk, the team would immediately go into tion, devising experiments, creating simulac baking the coated samples, irradiating the with lasers, burning them with acids, working feverishly until an excited phone call inform coordinators Jackson and Jumper that, where the mixture didn't yield an acceptable shrolimage, it made a remarkably fine Hollandai sauce.

Over the years, "sindonologists" have va iously suggested that the image could have a sulted from primitive xerography involving negatively charged ink powder, or from light ning striking a shallow grave. Tinting, dyein weaving, and imprinting have all been me tioned. So, of course, has painting. So h scorching with a hot statue. The "vaporograph" theory holds that the image was formed I a mixture of ammonia (derived from sweat and aloes (present in burial spices). For while, some STURP members inclined to the notion of "flash photolysis," the exact reverof the process that has left poignant "shae ows" of plumbing valves and other objects of certain walls in Hiroshima.

The STURP team has put all these theorie and many more, to the test. In 1978, with the help of the Revs. Peter Rinaldi and Adai Otterbein, both of the U.S.-based Holy Shrou Guild, the group negotiated the unfamilia curial bureaucracies in the Vatican and Turi and secured permission to run a series of se phisticated nondestructive tests on the shrou itself. They scanned and photographed th cloth, employing all parts of the spectrum They picked up microscopic bits of fiber an debris off the surface of the linen for chemical and microscopic analysis. A dozen of th threads that had been snipped from the shrow by Turin's Sisters of Saint Joseph in 197 were transferred to STURP's custody.

The research effort is now winding down The tests have been completed. Each of the team members has published the details of specific findings in his narrow area of invest tigation. (Their articles have appeared in journals like Applied Optics and X-ray Spec trometry-what Eric Jumper calls the "oper literature.") Jumper, Jackson, Rogers, and Schwalbe have pulled the disparate findings into comprehensive summaries, and last May Schwalbe and Jackson delivered copies of a draft report to Umberto II in Lisbon and Anastasio Cardinal Ballestrero in Turin. A scheduled audience with Pope John Paul II did not take place, for the Holy Father was shot in the arm and stomach as the STURP delegation waited for his arrival.

It was never the intention of STURP to issue, it were, an ex cathedra pronouncement on e authenticity of the Shroud of Turin. The cts, as team members never tire of repeatg, will just have to speak for themselves. The facts are as follows. First, there is a rtain amount of weak circumstantial evince that either supports or does not contraet the proposition that the linen cloth on nich the image of a crucified man appears is pout 2,000 years old, STURP, however, scorns rcumstantial evidence. Because Turin has t to permit carbon-14 dating of the fabric, e age of the shroud remains an open queson. Second, it is STURP's conclusion that me of the forgery theories is tenable. Neier are any of the "natural phenomenon" hytheses. Third, the composition of the garet-red "bloodstains" has been nailed down. inally, the team has determined the chemistry the image itself. They know, in short, what e picture is "made of." They cannot, for the fe of them, say how it was made,

No member of the STURP team will state, as professional, what all this adds up to. When ie question is posed directly, most of them and to divide their personas into "scientist" nd "layman" as a prelude to giving two diferent answers. Bill Mottern, a nondestructivesting specialist who develops (among other ings) antiterrorist detection devices at Sania Labs, is typical, "I went in as a doubtng Thomas," he explains one day over a cup f coffee in the visitors' reception area of the aximum-security laboratory complex, "and ome of my doubts have been removed. But peaking as a scientist, I'm not sure the matter rill ever be solved to anyone's satisfaction."

Bob Dinegar is somewhat less guarded. "As n unbiased scientist," he observes one eveing, "I cannot state that the shroud is auhentic. I know of no way we could prove it. can't think of a way. I can't think of anyme who could think of a way." We are sitting n a Spanish restaurant, Philomena's, lodged n one of the security bunkers that once inulated everything "on the hill" from the world pelow, and Dinegar pauses to sip the Dos Equis beer at his elbow. "Personally, I have his gut feeling that it's the real thing.'

"A darn fine project"

OBERT HUDSON DINEGAR, chairman of STURP's carbon-14-dating committee, is a wiry fellow, a former college boxer, an alumnus of Trinity School and Cornell University, and an inveterate packrat whose living-room furniture is embellished with coasters and embroidered arm patches from places like Lincoln, Landstuhl, Paris, and Grand Hotel Sitea. His graying hair is tamed in a crewcut, and he looks like a highschool track coach when he lounges about his home in a green polyester sweatsuit. He says "vup" a lot, and "nope."

Dinegar came to Los Alamos when cement was being poured to make the town permanent and the ink on his Columbia Ph.D. in physical chemistry was barely dry. It was his second experience of life in the provinces, the first occurring in 1945, when he was stationed at the Banana River Naval Air Station. (In December of that year, Dinegar made the weather forecast for the PBM search plane that went after the five missing aircraft of the "Lost Squadron" in the Bermuda Triangle. The search plane also vanished.) He took to Los Alamos immediately because it was at once so remote and idyllic yet so reassuringly stocked with people whose backgrounds resembled his own. "This is a real gringo place," he says.

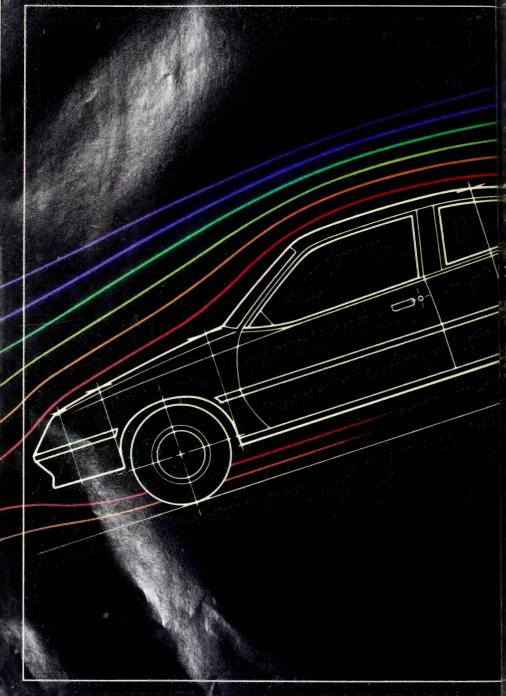
His job has been the same for thirty years "I make bombs"—and his office lies out of harm's way on Two Mile Mesa, a secluded, wooded area where many of the labs have their own firehouses. When he is not making explosions one can generally find him at Trinity-on-the-Hill Episcopal Church, where he is Father Dinegar, assistant pastor. He was

ordained a priest in 1959.

Dinegar was browsing among the paperbacks in a drugstore in 1976 when he came across The Fifth Gospel, by Thomas Humber, and learned about the Shroud of Turin. A month later, he met physicist John Jackson, who was enrolled in the same theology course at the College of Santa Fe. Jackson had been studying the shroud off and on for eight years and was now looking for disciples, knocking about the Sunbelt like Christ about Judea and saying, in effect, "Come. Follow me." Dinegar followed. So did Ray Rogers, Don Janney, and Roger Morris. STURP, not yet incorporated, soon swelled to embrace some thirty scientists.

"For me it was the culmination of my career," Dinegar says, "being able to put science and religion together, whether the shroud is a hoax or is not. Sure, I worried that some people would feel betrayed if it turned out to be a fake, and I worried that that sense of betraval could even extend to their faith. But as a scientist I felt I had a duty to investigate and report. As a churchman . . . ? Well, I've always known that the path to both ends was more dangerous than you'd think. Still, Christianity never depended on the shroud. And if

"Christianity never depended on the shroud. And if it turned out to be real . . .?"



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it turned out to be real ...?" The rest of the team did not have to confront the obligations of the collar. For them, as Don Janney put it. "it was just a darn fine project."

N LATE September 1978, Dinegar, Rogers, Janney, Jackson, Jumper, and twenty-eight other physicists, chemists, engineers, and hotographers arrived in Italy with sixtyeight boxes of fragile, glitch-prone equipment weighing six tons and marked with orange

Fr. Peter Rinaldi, STURP's soft-spoken minister without portfolio to Cardinal Ballestrero. had proved to be an effective diplomat, wringing an agreement from Turin to give the Americans the shroud at the conclusion of a six-week exposition of the relic set for August and September-its first public display since Prince Umberto's wedding in 1933. The Italian-born Rinaldi had been present then as a thirteen-vear-old altar boy.

Each member of the team carried a sixtythree-page, green-bound "Operations Test Plan for Investigation of the Shroud of Turin by Electromagnetic Radiation at Various Wavelengths." Jackson and Jumper had apportioned every minute the team would have with the shroud among various experiments.

(The schedule was loosely modeled on the /r Force's PERT system, the planning methal NASA adopted for the Apollo program.) To booklet contained much advice besides. "I team members," the authors wrote, "shoul avoid giving the impression that 'the Amicans have landed.' Turin is very sensitive this unfortunate American stereotype."

With its broad, leafy boulevards, a view the Alps, and a street plan laid out in a reular grid (a legacy of the days when the cit on the Po was a fortified Roman outpost Turin does not look like an Italian city. feel like one. Tourists tend to shun it. But was the birthplace of Camillo Cavour, and Fiat, and, like any self-respecting Italian ntropolis, it has a communist mayor, Bele guered centuries ago by the barbarians at later by the French, it is nowadays period cally assaulted by the terrorist Red Brigade The STURP team was confined to quarters or afternoon when Brigatisti leaders spread th word that the shroud was on their hit list.

It was a busy time in Turin's life. The reolution in Iran was under way and ang crowds dutifully surged through the stree and hanged the shah in effigy. Pope John Pa I had just died, abruptly, and a half doze cardinals, some of them chronically papabil were ensconced along with the STURP team



Members of STURP and



crand Hotel Sitea, preparing for the final of their second trip to Rome in a month. In the exposition of the shroud, which had racted more than three million viewers in weeks (the King Tut exhibit at Washgton's National Gallery accommodated are 832,853 visitors over seventeen weeks) is drawing to a close. Nourished by street nders, throngs of the devout hugged the gray terior of the Duomo San Giovanni, awaiting eir chance to catch a glimpse of the relic, uch floated in the gloom behind bulletoof glass, encased in an atmosphere of pure trogen.

N THE NIGHT of October 8, at 10:24 P.M., after armed guards had herded the last remnant of worshipers from the cathedral, STURP took custody of e shroud. Covered with red silk, it was cared on its plywood backing by a phalanx of iests and scholars, from the Duomo to the ljoining palazzo, past baroque paintings and ider the gaze of unself-conscious putti on the iling.

The STURP team was installed in the seven ome for visiting princes. Their equipment did arrived hours before, released from cusms only after Cardinal Ballestrero mortiged one of his churches to post a forty-mil-

on-lire bond.

Like nurses shifting a patient from bed to ed, the Americans transferred the shroud to a 20,000 aluminum mounting frame that could rotated through 360°, securing the linen in ace with small polyethylene-coated magnets avoid damaging the fabric. (The Italians, owever, had simply affixed the shroud to the ywood with thumbtacks.) A Cartesian wire rid system was placed over the linen to prode coordinates for later reference. During ie next 120 hours, protected by heavily ared representatives of five different police orces—a Brigate Rosse member had just been pprehended inside the palazzo-the STURP am worked around the clock, devouring arry-out food when they had the time, sleepig on cots.

They took about eighty photomosaics of the aroud and processed sixty pairs of X-ray film, anning the X-ray processing tank into a laies' toilet. They recorded thirty-six X-ray-uorescence spectra, eighty-five infrared-reectance scans, and eighteen thermograms. Ising a pressure-sensitive roller, Bob Dinegar and Ray Rogers collected thirty-two samples the sticky tape from the surface of the linen. Iark Evans and Sam Pellicori shot photoraphs through a microscope whenever the

palazzo's sixteenth-century floors momentarily stopped vibrating. Barrie Schwortz and Vern Miller of the Brooks Institute of Photography went through several hundred rolls of film. Dr. Giovanni Riggi of the Turin Polytechnic, one of several Italian scientists invited to participate, vacuumed the back of the shroud for any loose debris. It was, in large measure, a carefully choreographed fishing expedition.

On the morning of Saturday, October 14, at 2:00 A.M., they finished. In the presence of Msgr. Pietro Caramello, custodian of the shroud, the cloth was covered with red silk, rolled around the velvet-covered staff, and secured with the wax seals of the Capella della Santa Sindone and the Archbishop of Turin. It was placed inside its protective encasements of wood, iron, asbestos, and silver, and deposited in a sepulchral niche above the altar of the Capella. The protective grille was locked with three keys, one of them going to the archbishop, two of them remaining with Caramello. The lock was then plugged with two more wax seals.

A simple "Our Father" was said in Italian, the words echoing off the polished blackmarble walls of the chapel. The Americans

could go home.

For the next two months they sat around, in Pasadena and Santa Barbara and Los Alamos and Albuquerque, wondering, as Ron London remembers, "what the hell we were going to do with all this data."

Space-age gadgetry

HE LOS ALAMOS National Laboratory is a whimsically plotted complex, like a Stone Age cattle ford that grew into a market town and then too quickly became a provincial capital. Inside one Russian doll of a building there is a darkened alcove, congested with equipment, most of it sentient. The hardware is crafted in flat metallic black and nonglare steel, its aspect further softened by blinking lights in electric green and red, the colors that lend stereo amplifiers and automobile dashboards that cachet of space-age competence.

Don Janney is demonstrating a Comtal digital image analyzer and display system (DIADS), similar to but slightly less sophisticated than the one at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, where most of STURP's image-enhancement work has been done. (Several private corporations have also offered facilities.) The DIADS display screen, composed of 262,144 "pixels," or picture elements, is connected to a storage disc with four memories, which in turn is

"The thing is, you can find almost any shape you want just in the background weave of the cloth."

plugged into a magnetic-tape monitor. Encoded on the tape is a series of numbers representing the intensity of each pixel. The numbers were produced by a micro lensitometer, which can "read" minute changes in image intensity in contiguous position of, say, a photograph, by measuring the amount of light that can be transmitted through the image from place to place. Today, the DIADS is working from the pictures taken in Turin.

It is a \$330,000 system and Janney is its master as he manipulates a palm-sized sphere that floats, like a roll-on-deodorant ball, in a plastic casing. The "track ball" controls a pinpoint of light that meanders across the screen until it enters a little box in front of the words "ramp enhancement." Janney stops it there. Then he presses a button and the instructions disappear. In their place jumps up the black-and-white image of a male face. It seems to have been etched or printed on grainy fabric. The man's beard is forked and his eyes are closed, and his hair appears wet and gnarled. The nose is full and Semitic.

The white dot remains on the monitor and Janney massages the ball in his hand, coaxing it into position. Move the dot to the upper left and the picture becomes by degrees an inky blur. Pass it diagonally to the lower left and the image gradually lightens into oblivion. Shift the diagonal to opposite corners and white becomes black, and black, white. The point of the exercise is to get as much good information from a bad picture as possible.

"Let's fool around with this for a while and see what we can see," Janney says. "This is a parlor game any number can play." He moves the ball around until the thing you notice most is an ugly welt on the man's left cheek, a blood-engorged foothill encroaching on the socket of the eye. The guy has been badly used. Janney points out the bruise and moves on. He is operating in what he calls an "unplanned mode." Janney once told me that his wife, Joan, accompanied him to Turin in a "tourist mode."

The pinprick is traveling again, transforming the image along its path. "See the strap that seems to go under the jaw and up the sides of the face? We once thought that was a chin band, what the Jews used to bind up the heads of their dead. A nice piece of circumstantial evidence for authenticity. But look"—he fiddles with the track ball—"see, the band runs all the way off the screen. It's just a different density in the weave, typical of hand-processed flax."

Don Janney is tall and balding and a bit gawky, with large, guileless eyes. He speaks deliberately, with a caesura between each syllable, savoring every consonant, sufferive vowels because he knows that right afterwal there is going to come a "d" or a "t" or make an "r," something he can really get knowth around. If one had a 45 r.p.m. recomposition of Jimmy Stewart's voice and played it at a r.p.m., it would sound like Don Janney.

The track ball is rolling and the face dum ly suffers the mutation until Janney finds wh he wants. It is the eyes. "They're not ju closed," he observes. "There seems to something lying on top of them." Jann traces an irregular circle over the fellow right eye and the outline of the object po out. More or less. "It was the custom amor Jews at the time of Christ to put coins or po sherds on the eyes of their dead, Bill Yarb rough, a numismatist, staved with us here for a few days and he thinks he can make out the impression of a lituus, which is a kind of sa erdotal wand that you find on some Roma coins, Fr. Francis Filas at Lovola says he ca even make out some Greek letters from a litur coin minted by Pontius Pilate around 29 A.D. But Janney is dubious. He spins the ball ar focuses on the underlying fabric itself. "Th thing is, you can find almost any shape ve want just in the background weave of the cloth."

Don Janney is group leader of M-5, a teal of forty scientists and engineers at Los Alame specializing in computerized "image enhanc ment" and nondestructive testing. Image e hancement was pioneered by the Jet Propu sion Laboratory in Pasadena during the 1960 as a way of filtering out "noise" from the pictures radioed back by Surveyer mod probes and the Mariner "fly-bys" of Mar After digitizing the image—transforming i point by point, into numbers—a technicia can bring it up on a screen and clean it ur Someone who knows his business can remove ten million miles of cosmic static and radi interference and sunspot activity and come u with a portrait of, say, Saturn that Yousi Karsh would gladly sign.

The instructions have come back on the tele vision and the ball of light is homing in o another box. A new image flashes on the moi itor, the same face but now soaked in ultriviolet light. There is a slight imperfection i the transmission, as when the horizontal baron a television screen gets stuck a few inche from the bottom. "Looks like we have a paity error," Janney explains. "Whenever a burgets into the image we call it a parity error and everyone stands around nodding sympathetically."

Janney runs a finger across the screen, the turns it ninety degrees and follows the pattern

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upward. "You can pick up some creases here," he says. "Creases are part of the lore of the shroud. We know the cloth was kept folded at one time because it was badly burned in a fire in 1532 that left triangular scorch marks running symmetrically up and down the linen just like a paper cutout. As you can see, the scorches fluoresce like there's no tomorrow. The image doesn't. That could be significant."

Clarice Cox, a mathematician, is looking over our shoulders. "What have you got there, Don?" she asks sympathetically. "Is that a

parity error?"

OCER MORRIS, Ron London, and Larry Schwalbe work in Don Janney's M-5 nondestructive-testing group. M-5's job is to analyze objects without taking them apart or blowing them up. It looks at the heat shields of missiles to make sure they contain no flies or cigarette butts or other impurities. With tomographic scanners it checks out the piping inside nuclear reactors. This is just the boring stuff. Much of what the M-5 staff does could land you in court if you decided to tell the Soviets about it.

Right now M-5 has my wedding ring. It has been placed in a clip in front of a cadmium-109 isotope source, which bombards it with 22 keV X rays. The X rays excite the elements in the ring, causing them to emit characteristic energies. A Si(Li) or "silly" detector (the notation signifies lithium-drifted silicon), chilled in a bath of -196.15°C liquid nitrogen, discriminates among the released energies and feeds the results into a multichannel analyzer and then onto a CRT (cathode-ray tube) display. Ron London, a Mormon from an old New Mexico family, peers at the arcane pulses as they shiver on the screen, "About a quarter of your ring is made of copper," he concludes, pulling on a Salem, "and about a sixth of it is silver. The rest is gold. In other words, it's fourteen carat. I hope that's what the jeweler said." It was.

X-ray fluorescence can tell you what anything is made of—in this case, anything with an atomic number greater than sixteen; not helium or hydrogen but elements with a certain heft, like lead, iron, and copper, materials often used in paint. It has long been a staple in the detection of art forgeries. Recently, when a "medieval" choir book in New York's Pierpont Morgan Library was subjected to X-ray testing, scientists discovered the presence of copper arsenite. Copper arsenite was not used in pigment until 1814.

Morris and his colleagues have been looking for similar giveaways on the shroud. But after months of exhaustive testing, based in data collected in Turin, the X-ray group coldetect only trace elements of strontium, drium, and iron. The calcium and strontin were distributed uniformly over all parts in the cloth and might have come from a where. Both elements, for instance, could have endeposited in the fabric itself during process of "retting," when flax plants are suffor weeks in warm pools, giving bacteria a paramecia an opportunity to chew out the mocellulose and release the fine linen fiber

The iron is more suggestive, "We can see in signatures everywhere," says Larry Schwal spilling a styrofoam cup of liquid nitrogen the floor and watching it cavort like merci and gather dust balls, "and iron oxide is us in some nigments. But there is no differer between the iron concentrations in the imaand the clear areas, so it doesn't seem ve likely that the color comes from iron-has pigment," Schwalbe is young, blond, a bearded. He looks like a sensitive Elizabeth poet, a trait somehow accentuated by a sliglimp, the legacy of a childhood bout wi polio. "The only place where iron conce trations are significantly higher than bacground," he continues, "is in the dark 'bloc areas. There is iron in blood, of course, at the amount of iron we found is consistent will what you'd expect from whole blood. But we can really say for sure is that there's iron

Bill Mottern's radiographs don't show mu of anything either. Whereas fluorescence caus X rays to be emitted, with radiography yshine X rays through something and captus them on film, like a chest X ray. The chang in absorption produce a signature, or pictur Radiography is the classic technique for d tecting underpainting, as when museum cur tors discover, to their delight, a lost Rube beneath some insipid Victorian allegory youth (or, to their chagrin, vice versa).

But the shroud image is so thin and delica that the radiographs reveal nothing except the weave pattern, the thirty-one patches (ar the holes they cover), stitches, creases, need holes, bits of salt and sand, watermarks, ar a few drops of wax. The "blood" leaves on the faintest of traces.

Unproven faker

ALTER MCCRONE, director of the McCrone Research Institute in Chicago, and one of the nation leading microscopists, believe that the traces of iron on the shroud were puthere deliberately. "I believe the shroud is

e," he told a meeting of the British Society the Turin Shroud on September 11, 1980, ut I cannot prove it." His assertion was lely publicized in Britain and the United

McCrone, a STURP member until his sudden ignation last year, is the man who demonated in 1974 that the ink in Yale Univery's supposedly pre-Columbian Vinland Map itained anastase, which was not used in ink til 1917. His opinions about the shroud are sed on microanalysis of particles lifted by nesive in Turin from all portions of the en-"blood" areas, image areas, clear backound areas-and loaned to him by STURP examination and comparison.

McCrone reported finding far more red parles (which he identified as iron oxide, used a pigment since prehistoric times) in the age areas than in the clear "control" areas. eventually concluded that the image had en painted by "a highly skilled and well-'ormed artist" employing a mixture of ironrth pigment and animal tempera in "a very

ute particle liquid suspension.'

McCrone's opinion carries considerable ight in scientific circles. He is a superb mioscopist—"the best in the world," says Ray igers, who believes nonetheless that McCrone s "made sweeping statements on the basis of very narrow analysis." There are some probns with McCrone's work, in STURP's view. any of the image and iron-rich "blood" areas erlap, and it is not possible to tell, with a pe sample, from which region the iron has me. Using the biuret/Lowry and fluoresaine tests, John Heller and Alan Adler of e New England Institute tested actual shroud orils for protein, which is present in tempera. ney found nothing, except in fibrils from the plood" areas. (Blood is a combination of on and protein.) Finally, iron-earth pigents are invariably contaminated with other ibstances-nickel and aluminum, for exame-but none of these can be found on the roud. Thus, while not questioning McCrone's pecific observations, when qualified and preented in a certain way, the STURP team, to a an, contests his conclusions.

"It's enough to make you want to reopen ie case of the Vinland Map," says Jumper, ith perhaps more pique than some among the TURP rank and file might betray. McCrone, or his part, is unmoved: "I am very sure of

ie data I have."

That a certain resentment exists is not surrising. The Shroud of Turin is a controveral artifact; it generates emotion the way a oft March rain urges crocuses to the surace. (On one occasion, an Italian shroud-researcher took some tape samples from a col- "If the shroud league at gunpoint.) Let us assume, however, that the Shroud of Turin is indeed a deliberate forgery, as McCrone believes, if not necessarily created in the manner McCrone describes. How, plausibly, might the job have been done by an artist working in the midfourteenth century, when the relic first ap-

If some colored substance was used, was it applied by brush? Image-enhancement specialists Don Lynn and Jean Lorre of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory have found that there is no "linear directionality" to the image; that is, the colored areas on the shroud are randomly oriented, a characteristic, they conclude, "which would not be consistent with hand application." Physicist Joe Acetta's infrared investigations show that the surface of the fabric underneath the image has not been altered. Still, a cunning draughtsman may have had his own haphazard, undetectable technique.

Medieval paints consisted of a pigment bonded with some kind of proteinaceous substance-glair (from the whites of eggs), milk casein, gelatin, sometimes even honey or earwax. Assume McCrone is right about the presence of pigment. What about the bonding agent? Here, the absence of protein is probably decisive. Most of the candidates-STURP has tested for them all, including boiled rat tails and gelatin from the ink in a fourteenthcentury Bible-also fluoresce under ultraviolet light. The image on the shroud does not.

Perhaps we are dealing with a dye or stain. Most of these have characteristic spectral reflectance features but, again, the image does not. Many medieval dyes, such as those made from shellfish or squid, migrate with water; others are hydrophobic and repel water. But the water thrown on the shroud to douse the accidental 1532 fire had no effect on the image, nor did the image retard the spread of the water stains.\* The Chambéry fire itself is suggestive. Temperatures inside the casket reached some 860° in some places, and large portions of the fabric were burned through by drops of molten silver. Paints, dyes, and stains are all discolored by intense heat. Sienna becomes "burnt sienna," for example. Yet those portions of the shroud image closest to the

was forged. it was forged by someone with considerable medical knowledge."

<sup>\*</sup> STURP has tried to reproduce the shroud image with acids, which will neither repel nor migrate with water. Thanks to the introduction of the serpente, a spiral condensing tube, medieval alchemists had successfully distilled sulfuric, hydrochloric, and nitric acid by the thirteenth century. Each of these, if applied in precisely the right amount, will turn linen yellow. The problem is creating a surface image of uniform density without scorching through the cloth, an obstacle STURP was unable to surmount.

scorches are the same color as those farthest

away.

Since all of this can probably be explained. let us agree that a skilled artist added some coloring agent to the cloth, using a medium lost to posterity during, say, the Hundred Years' War. It is instructive to note how he would have had to apply it. Using a Wilde M400 Photomacroscope, Sam Pellicori of the Santa Barbara Research Institute and Mark Evans of the Brooks Institute of Photography shot a series of remarkably sharp color photographs of the shroud magnified eighteen times. The pictures confirmed that the image is made up of thousands of translucent yellow microfibrils, all of them of the same hue and darkness. Whatever is responsible for the image did not color whole threads but only the topmost of the many tiny, twisted fibrils of which each thread is composed. There has been no capillary action of any kind, as one would expect from a liquid medium.

A painstaking craftsman with infinite patience might have produced such an effect. More difficult would be painting an image so pale that it would be invisible close up but could be seen clearly from a distance of four to five meters, due to lateral neural inhibition. "I was looking at the shroud for an hour one night in Turin," Joan Janney recalls. "The closer you get the less you see. How could you paint it in such a way that while you're painting it you can't see it? I'm not saying the shroud's authentic. I'm just asking."

One way out of this dilemma, perhaps, would be to impress the image mechanically—with block printing, say, or by wrapping the linen around a hot statue and gently singeing it. The block-print theory suffers from the fact that no coloring matter with the spectral characteristics of dyes, pigments, or stains can be found on the shroud. Singeing also has its drawbacks. It is unlikely, first, that a red-hot statue would scorch the cloth evenly. If the cloth were merely "tented" over the statue, the heat, which is isotropic, would leave the image blurred and distorted. "You can scorch cloth, sure," says Ron London. "You just can't make it look like what we see."

There remains, finally, the curious fact that the Shroud of Turin is a perfect photographic negative. The face on the shroud that has been so widely reproduced, the stringy hair, the knobby knees, the jutting lower lip, the long fingers, finely shaped like those of a fetus in utero—no one really saw these things until a chance discovery in 1898. What mechanism, accidental or deliberate, would have left behind a negative image five hundred years before the invention of photography?

Crucifins

Y OWN FIRST encounter with he Shroud of Turin came when Idetermined to explore certain shees in my parents' library that had ing been sealed by a daybed. They containe cache of forbidden literature, volumes that whatever reason my parents cared neithely leave out nor to throw out. These include Ideal Marriage: Its Physiology and Technical (1926), by Th. H. Van de Velde, M.D.: collected yearbooks of the Dutch Treat Ch. and Pierre Barbet's A Doctor at Calvary. not recall my age at the time. I was vo enough for my attention to be drawn natural to the pictures in the last of these books. those in the first.

Barbet's work was a medical treatise on Shroud of Turin, his research made possile by the hundreds of cadavers and numer amputated arms and legs that he had at disposal as chief of surgery at St. Joseph Hospital in Paris during the 1930s. His no notable discovery was that the nail wourk clearly visible on the shroud, were in the rile place—in the wrists, not in the fleshy pall (Barbet gruesomely demonstrated that a r through the palm could not support a make weight.) This observation was confirmed the discovery in 1968 of the skeleton of a file century crucifixion victim. Jehohanon, ir Jerusalem ossuary; the bones in his wrist he been grazed by a nail, similar to the one sal embedded in his heel.

The significance of Barbet's finding is the medieval artists, seemingly unaware of anatomy of crucifixion, routinely painted crucified Christ with the nails piercing palms. If the shroud was forged, it w forged by someone with considerable media knowledge. Such people existed, of course. Bridget of Sweden (d. 1373) inferred in h Revelations that the nails must have be driven through Christ's hands "qua os solida" erat"-where the bone was more solid. Me ical dissections were not uncommon durithe thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. El there is no record of any artist studying and omy until Donatello, who was born thin years after the shroud surfaced in France.

INCE THE publication of A Doctor Calvary, other physicians have confirmed, refined, or extended Barbet work. Dr. Robert Bucklin's interest the shroud dates from the 1940s, coeval withis career as a forensic pathologist. Once

Dating the eternal

"The wounds depicted on the shroud are consistent with an actual crucifixion."

hnical adviser to the television series "Quin'(he currently holds Quincy's job in the
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profession, encountered every wound sufed by the man of the shroud, though never,
he admits, "all on the same body." He once
pended himself from a crucifix, using leaththongs, and remembers the pain as "all but
pearable," his deltoid and pectoral muscles
ng into spasms and leaving him unable to
athe.

Sucklin has never done any experiments inving human cadavers—"you can get into uble doing that in the United States," he blains—but is aware of someone who has, ugh he would not elaborate on his iden-

That someone is Dr. Frederick Zugibe, chief dical examiner of Rockland County and an ociate professor of pathology at Columbia iversity. In addition to experimenting with claimed corpses, Zugibe suspended some a hundred living volunteers on a homemade wifix in his New York home to study blood emistry, respiration, and cardiovascular ess. Both Zugibe and Bucklin independently orlude—for different reasons—that the unds depicted on the shroud are consistent than actual crucifixion.

Bucklin had always been uncomfortable with rbet's "Gallic emotion"—the Frenchman d a consuming belief in the shroud's auenticity-so he set about with a gimlet eye to race Barbet's steps. He looked at the angle blood flows and at the size of the wounds. e counted the number of scourge marks pore than a hundred) and their direction, ncluding that the victim had been whipped th a Roman flagrum (a scourge used for mishing slaves), while nude, by two men, ie of whom was shorter than the other. He nfirmed that the victim's legs had not been oken, a point made by the Gospels, and rther contended that whoever the man of e shroud was, he had died, of congestive art failure, before a Roman lancea entered s chest between the fifth and sixth ribs and erced the right ventricle of his heart, allowg blood and pleural fluid to escape.\*

HILE THE pathologists at least agree that the "man of the shroud" was crucified, no one is willing to stake his reputation on the chronology of the cloth itself. The Shroud of Turin can be definitively traced back only to 1357, when Jeanne de Vergy, a widow apparently strapped for cash, exhibited the relic for a fee to pilgrims visiting the Collegiate Church in Lirey. Jeanne's husband, Geoffrey de Charny, from whom she is thought to have inherited the relic, had stepped between an English lance and the French king at the Battle of Poitiers the year before. The secret of the shroud's origins was interred with his bones.

Reports of a shroud—some with images, some without—appear frequently before 1357. None of these can be linked conclusively with the Shroud of Turin. Following a trail of circumstantial evidence, British author Ian Wilson has suggested that the shroud is actually the Mandylion, a cloth venerated in Constantinople as a "portrait" of Christ from 525 A.D. until its disappearance in 1204 during the Fourth Crusade. The Mandylion showed only Christ's face within a sturdy, boxlike frame, but Wilson believes the shroud was folded so as to leave only the face visible. Hence STURP's interest in the creases.

There are a few other bits of inconclusive data relating to the shroud's age. Swiss criminologist Max Frei, formerly of the Zurich Police Scientific Laboratory, and a consultant to Interpol, was allowed to collect some microscopic debris from the shroud in 1973. He isolated forty-eight pollen samples. Several of them appeared identical to pollens found in 2,000-year-old sediment in Lake Generazeth. But sediment is notoriously unreliable for dating purposes, and pollen can travel great distances in the wind. Miami regularly gets sandfalls from the Sahara.

Gilbert Raes, director of the Laboratorium de Meulmeester Voor Technologie der Textilstaffen at the Rijksuniversiteit-Gent, has examined the linen itself. The weave is a three-to-one herringbone twill of a type unknown in medieval France. The pattern was rare in the Middle East, but it was occasionally manufactured there during the time of Christ. Swatches comparable to the shroud have been taken from mummies unearthed at the Roman city of Antinoopolis in Egypt.

Carbon-14 testing has not yet been done on the shroud because STURP has hewn hard to its agreement with Cardinal Ballestrero that it wouldn't be done until some problems are re-

<sup>\*</sup>Dr. Zugibe thinks not. "If I were in a court of w," he says, "I'd give the cause of death as cardiac di respiratory arrest due to cardiogenic, traumatic, hypobolemic shock." And he places the nail ounds somewhat closer to the hand than Barbet id Bucklin do—though still nowhere near the ilm. "Take your hand and touch your thumb to our pinky," he explains. "See the gulley that rms? At the bottom of that, just before the wrist, where the nails went through. You can feel the accept the large of the country of the

solved. The problems are more political than technical. As one STURP scientist put it, "The Cardinal is willing but his flock is weak."

The principle behind carbon-14 dating, introduced in 1949, is relatively simple. Carbon-14 is a radioisotope produced by bombardment of the nitrogen atoms in the earth's atmosphere with cosmic rays. The amount of carbon-14 in the atmosphere is thought to have been more or less constant for millennia. When a plant or animal dies, it ceases to ingest C-14; indeed, the carbon-14 begins to decay (into nitrogen) at a known rate-its level is reduced by half every 5,730 years, give or take a half century. By measuring the ratio of carbon-14 atoms to normal carbon-12 atoms, it is possible to determine when an organism (flax, in the case of the shroud) stopped respirating. The procedure is analogous to Sherlock Holmes's deduction of the time of a murder by noting the depth to which a piece of parsley had sunk into a slab of butter.

Until recently, C-14 dating required destruction of a large portion of any sample—as much as several square feet of the shroud. But a new technique, pioneered at the University of Rochester, and using a particle accelerator, can make do with a piece of linen the size of a postage stamp. There is enough shroud material underneath the patches alone to carbon-date the relic two hundred times.

Umberto II has given his permission to do the carbon-14 tests but Cardinal Ballestrero has not. During their Turin visit last May, John Jackson and Larry Schwalbe delicately broached the subject. Most STURP members believe that carbon-14 dating will eventually be done. The only question is when. As STURP ambassador Rinaldi once noted, "Rome is eternal."

If carbon-14 tests showed that the shroud was manufactured during the first century A.D., it would still be just another inconclusive piece of evidence, for presumably a methodical forger would have taken pains to obtain cloth of appropriate age. The maker of the shroud, if indeed it was fabricated, was obviously an ingenious fellow. But could he have created the image? That, not the cloth's age, remains the shroud's principal conundrum.

ONTROVERSY over the image erupted the moment Jeanne de Vergy exhibited the shroud in 1357. Immediately (according to a later source) Henry of Poitiers, Bishop of Troyes, denounced it as "cunningly painted" and claimed that he knew who had done it. In STURP's view, this is still the only evidence against the shroud's authen-

ticity. It is a considerable black mark.

In 1453, Geoffrey de Charny's granddacter gave or sold the shroud to the House Savoy, who took it as their royal standard, as eventually placed it within the ducal clugiat Chambery. It came to Turin in 1578, he ing the next four hundred years, opinion also the shroud correlated closely with opinion about the House of Savoy. Scores of trawere published on the subject, variously womous or apologetic, and still lively reader

The first "scientific" examination of shroud came in 1898, the year before Tusired Fiat, when King Umberto I grudgin assented to a week-long exposition of the reduced to elebrate the fiftieth anniversary of founding of the Kingdom of Italy. Using wooden box camera with a Voigtländer les and working under extremely poor condition an amateur photographer named Secondo awas allowed to snap several pictures of cloth.

Pia was shocked when he began develope the film in his darkroom. The shroud, he of covered, in its natural state is a photograph negative yielding, in the form of a phographic negative, a positive. Where the actiimage on the cloth appears dark against a ligbackground, and presents a dim, imprecitentative aspect, the negative, light again dark, reveals a lifelike form of startling clariappropriately shaded and properly shape from lips to eyelids, toes to eyebrows, matache to pigtail.

Many have attempted to duplicate the fect. In 1978, Joe Nickell, formerly reside magician at the Houdini Magical Hall of Fam applied a mixture of myrrh and aloes to a w cloth molded around a bas relief of Bing Croby, creating a portrait of Crosby that share the positive/negative characteristics of the image on the shroud. Reporting his breathrough in The Humanist, Nickell conclude that "the man in the shroud, behind those fals whiskers, is a fake."

There was one property of the shroud, how ever, that Nickell was unable to duplicate This was something that Eric Jumper and Joh Jackson had discovered two years earlier.

#### Three-dimensional man

ACKSON AND JUMPER met at Kirtland Ai Force Base in 1974. They were both so entists (Jackson a physicist, Jumper arengineer), both captains (they are now majors, although Jackson is in the reserves) both working with lasers at the Air Force Weapons Lab, both in their early thirties, and

# 1981 U.S. Gov't Report:

## THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL MEMPHIS, TENN. Carlton Scores Best In Cigaret Testing

WASHINGTON (UPI) — The Carlton king-size filter
cigaret sold in a hard pack had the lowest tar, nicotine
rating of any cigaret tested in

# CARLTON IS LOWEST.

Today's Carlton has even less tar than the version tested for the Government's 1981 Report. Despite new low far brands introduced since-Carlton still lowest.

Box-<u>less</u> than 0.01 mg tar, 0.002 mg, nicotine.

Box: Less than 0.01 mg, "tar", 0.002 mg, nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method. Soft Pack: 1 mg. "tar", 0.1 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report May '81. Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

both devout Catholics. Both men were transferred at the same time to the United States Air Force Academy, and, until recently, lived in Colorado Springs. Jackson now teaches at the University of Colorado there, but Jumper has moved with his family to the Air Force Institute of Technology in Dayton, Ohio.

To the extent that one can speak of STURP's "onlie begetter" it is John Jackson. Jackson's appearance and his manner are clean cut. He dresses casually but neatly, looking something like Jimmy Olsen. His hair is carefully trimmed, as if he expects to be called to active duty at any moment. A fossil bone is positioned deliberately on his desk in the University of Colorado's Dwire Hall. Muzak plays softly from a radio, as if to drown out stray and unexpected sounds—a deep breath, a footstep, the aggravating rustle of leaves.

"I got interested in the shroud when I was thirteen or fourteen," Jackson says, "when my mom showed me a picture of it. It made a great impression on me. Then, around 1968, I read a book about the shroud by John Walsh and I was struck by the details you could glean from photographs. The whole field of image processing was just opening up then, and I knew I wanted someday to do some kind of analysis of the shroud. In early 1974 I met Don Devan from Information Sciences, Inc. in Santa Barbara, and we started doing some image-intensity work. Then I met Eric. And then the whole project took off."

Image-intensity work goes back to French biologist Paul Vignon, who, as early as 1902, suspected, but could not prove, that the image on the shroud somehow contained "distance information." He figured that because parts of the shroud that could not have been in contact with the body, if there was a body, had an image on them anyway, the intensity of the image probably varied, proportionately, with the distance the "body" would have been from the cloth. In short, there is 3-D information encoded in the image.

Theoretically, if you had an instrument that could translate degrees of "darkness" into proportionate degrees of "distance," and if you mathematically factored in the assumption that the cloth was draped over a body and didn't just sit on top of it like a piece of gypsum board, then you could distill enough information to turn the shroud into a statue. If you generated, say, 570 different cross sections of the image from top to bottom like a CAT scan, and fed the results into a machine programmed to make 570 tracings on pieces of cardboard, and got fifty or sixty

friends together to cut the pieces out in glue them sequentially one on top of the ray you ought to end up with a nearly per-3-D likeness of the man of the shroud.

HIS, EVENTUALLY, is exactly v Jackson and Jumper did. The started out by looking for a volun who was about the size of Iim Carter before he started jogging. Then the made him take off his clothes and lie a a piece of linen on which the shroud im had been projected and carefully trace They drew the other half of the cloth of his head, photographed him, and plotted ridge line of contact points-nose to chin breast to wrist to toe. It tallied with areas of darkest intensity on the shroll Then Jackson and Jumper uncovered volunteer and took photographs of him lyn there in his boxer shorts. By comparing h two sets of photographs, they estimated to cloth-body distance from place to place. Ne. using a microdensitometer, they measured to variable intensity of the shroud image itsel-The cloth-body distance and intensity curve matched.

Bill Mottern, down at Sandia, soon provided confirmation with his VP-8 image analyzer, which obviated the need for a huma volunteer. The VP-8 can directly translar pictorial intensity into distance. If you conect it to a CRT screen you can bring up 3-D image from a two-dimensional object provided that the object has somehow been encoded with distance information.

At the University of Colorado there is \$20,000 Interpretation System VP-8 Imag Analyzer, and John Jackson turns it on or afternoon and begins to play. He puts photograph of the shroud on a light table beneath a TV camera that feeds the imaginto a computer and then throws it up of the screen. The image appears in a com puterized form, like the engineering design of an automobile, or a topographical map You can take the image and tilt it, turn i around, look at it in profile, make it do somer saults. "This thing is so much fun," says Jack son, who has been spinning knobs for ter minutes now. But the fact is, when you see the shroud on the VP-8, there is a correctly pro portioned three-dimensional face staring ou at you.

It doesn't work with ordinary photographs Jackson points out. It only happens when the degree of illumination of an object "depends on its distance from the camera." A painting of Pope Pius XI, for example, which Jackson on hand, gives a 3-D image that looks Neanderthal Man—beetle-browed, flated, mouth contorted and eyes sunk deep, the head. "Here's what Joe Nickell's sion looks like," says Jackson. He clearly s avenged as he puts Bing Crosby under camera. The 3-D image comes up on the een. It looks terrible.

our years ago, Jackson and Jumper took ss sections of the shroud with the VP-8, hundreds of cardboard tracings, and then ed in some friends. Except for the distoris introduced by the triangular scorch rks, the results were quite lifelike. The face of each shroud statue, of course, is py gray, and rather rough, like the unshed limbs of Michelangelo marbles. But features stand out in just the right way: nose protrudes, the eyes are set back, the ns and legs are rounded, and the inch-thick ard rests on the chest. Except for the fact it the man's fingers are modestly covering genitals, one would be tempted to shake hand. Jumper and Jackson proudly sent busts to Umberto II and Cardinal Ballesro, keeping a brace of life-size statues for emselves.

OHN JACKSON, by now, is a believer, but he insists, convincingly, that "my responsibility is to scientific rigor." In what he has published to date on the shroud, not mention laser physics, this has certainly en the case, whatever emotion he may have vested in STURP. We are talking one afteron in a stucco-faced restaurant with a view the Rockies and the hundred-car freight ins that carry Colorado's low-sulfur coal to over plants in Texas. The restaurant, Martérita's, serves only soup and salad and ead, which the proprietor firmly insists is Colorado tradition, not a California one. Let's look at the whole picture," Jackson ys.

"We know that the shroud has 3-D inforation on it. That could have happened by cident, but it took us a long time to figure it a way to duplicate the effect, even knowing what we were trying to do. The image is so a photographic negative, again someting hard to produce before you had photography. Of course, that could have been an ecident, too. Then there are the scourge tarks. They're the right shape and they aange angles with elevation. The nail holes re in the right place. The 'blood' flows corspond with the angle of crucifixion. Remember that the Romans stopped crucifying eople during Constantine's reign, so it

wouldn't be easy for a medieval artist to get the procedure straight." He pauses to order another cup of split-pea soup. Marguérita will serve as much as you can eat, and Jackson has already had two salads.

"Somewhere along the way, you'd think a forger would have made some mistake," he continues. "But there aren't any. And some of the little touches are very nice. There's a bit of dirt near the soles of the feet. The blood from the lance wound runs along the side of the body and onto the back. Some of the scourge-mark structures are so fine you can pick them up only under UV. Any one of these things you can explain away. But when you add up everything we know, the argument against a forgery acquires a certain force."

Jackson takes a long draught of fresh lemonade. "As for whether the image is Christ's, all I can say is that the wounds are consistent with the gospel accounts. I mean this was no ordinary execution. Look at the guy! Somebody really wanted to do him in, not just kill him but torture him to death."

Blood tests

OLORADO SPRINGS is not a government town but it has an umbilicus to Washington as surely as Los Alamos does, or Albuquerque, or San José. NORAD headquarters huddles nearby under Mount Cheyenne, capable of withstanding anything Los Alamos could throw at it. ("Maybe," smiles one lab scientist.) Fort Carson sprawls south of the city, its trim, boring, oppressively tidy residential streets enlivened by signs for "Tanks Xing." Colorado Springs is not growing as fast as some other Sunbelt cities but the same kinds of high-tech firms are moving in, the subdevelopments are moving further out, and the traffic on the highways is occasionally slowed by ponderous "wide-load" flatbed trucks hauling massive dish antennas.

Eric Jumper lives on Ranch Drive, named for what it supplanted. In the dining room of his home stands a cardboard sculpture of the shroud, hovering sourly in a corner like Jeeves. A small picture of the shroud adorns a wall. A cardboard bust of the shroud's face rests on the piano, a clone of the one Umberto owns. On top of a wooden filing cabinet in Jumper's office lies an iron replica of the nail that pierced Jehohanon's foot.

Jumper seems to like "things": not just shroud paraphernalia but also photographic slides, stained glass, models of jet aircraft and "Somewhere along the way, you'd think a forger would have made some mistake. But there aren't any."

trains, rusted forks, horseshoes. On a desk in his office rests a TRS-80 computer, which governs a Scripsit word processor and Centronics-737 printer. This enables him to write letters. A nearby closet overflows with magicians' equipment. He demonstrates the dancing cane—competently, even without the necessary dark background.

Jumper looks like a young Charles Addams character, bespectacled, slightly pudgy, unexcitable. He describes himself as "very skeptical," but there is something disarming and sympathetic about his manner, something it may take more than one meeting to discern. One evening I watched him judge a science fair-they are big in the Southwest, where people take their technology seriously. He passed by the glamorous exhibits of precocious teenagers to spend some time with a shy girl who had built a nine-foot-long dirigible. It weighed seven pounds. When filled with helium, unfortunately, it still weighed two pounds. Not blue-ribbon material. But Jumper talked with her for fifteen minutes. "I wanted to give her the benefit of the doubt," he told me later. "I was looking for the germ of an idea."

He is sitting in his kitchen, smoking a troublesome pipe and drinking a vile hot beverage made from Tang, powdered Nestea, cinnamon, and cloves. It is a staple in the Jumper household, They call it Russian Tea. "The 3-D business doesn't prove anything about the shroud," he begins, "It's just an observation, and any ultimate hypothesis about what made the image on the shroud must fit that observation. But it's interesting from the point of view of whether the shroud is a forgery or not. It suggests that a real human shape must have been involved. But it also means that the image is largely pressure-independent. You'd think the back image on the shroud would be darker because a 165pound body was lying on it, but it isn't, and you'd think that-why won't this thing stay lit?—you'd think that parts of the front of the body, which must have been several inches from the cloth, wouldn't show up at all, but they do."

Jumper fixes more Russian Tea and leads the way back to his office. There he sets up a \$3,000 American Optical binocular microscope. "I thought you'd like to see what the tape samples look like," he says, selecting a slide from a plastic case. "This one's from an off-image area but it has a little bit of everything on it. Take a look."

The magnification is at 430x, and the image looks like a thin Chinese soup. There are a few insect parts, some tiny bubbles, and a long thin strand of red silk, probably from the cloth

that normally covers the shroud. Strand out flax are strewn haphazardly like noodles acos the field, some of them seemingly transparent others a translucent vellow. The cells of b fibrils are stacked end to end, giving the mill pression of bamboo, Here and there-one to shift the slide around to find them (slob because moving a slide too fast at 430x max your eves feel like they've jumped of moving train) -one can make out rede particles ranging in size from lilliputian speto coarse agglutinations that appear, unmagnification, to be the size of an "o." To is the famous "blood": real degraded blo maybe, or pigment, or iron oxide. There not a lot of it.

"It's those yellow microfibrils that make the image," Jumper explains. "You find the all over the shroud, but they're concentration the image areas, and they're all that safaint honey-straw color. It's their relative electration from place to place that gives illusion of lightness or darkness. The fibbour institute the dots in a newspaper photo'

I went out to see Jumper the next day the Air Force Academy, where all the builings are silver and all the uniforms are blurcher and the Rocky Mountains rise abruptly from the parking lot, as if to taunt the cadets in training liders who waft overhead. Jumper's officonsists of a cubicle in the aeronautics depament. His desk is cluttered with test pape spent packages of Lipton Instant Tomato Sou and a few of his own writings (e.g., "Examing a Rule of Thumb for the Relation Betwee Camber and Zero-Lift Angle of Attack").

"I don't expect ours is going to be the la look at the shroud," he says. "All we've dot is prove a lot of negatives. There's still the carbon-14 to do. That will enhance the crecibility of the shroud, or kill it. It doesn't make any difference to me. As for the image, mown opinion is that because there is such regular mathematical relationship betwee image intensity and cloth-body distance, som very simple phenomenon is at work. I thin we're going to kick ourselves when we get the answer and find out how simple it was. Adeliberate forgery seems to me out of the question.

"I leave open the possibility that some wel meaning fool touched up the 'blood' areas wit pigment. But that still seems far-fetched. We can explain everything without having to possome screwball. The bottom line is that Helle and Adler have demonstrated intense Sore absorption, characteristic of porphyrin. I other words, the 'blood' is blood. The onlithing we can't tell is whether it's human of animal."

.....

## The promise of **Il lies just beyond** ur shore. Some say the sk puts it beyond ur reach.

There may be more than 20 billion rels of oil still to be discovered neath our offshore waters. And along hit, possibly 100 trillion cubic feet of natural gas.

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Through our ARCO Oil and Gas Company, we're working to develop the safest,

.10<del>0</del> 75 Today, technology 50 gives us the potential of tapping these vast reserves. But every concerned American must demand

thoughtful answers to

jestions about environmental safety.

The facts are these: Few of the 21,000 irrent offshore wells have caused enronmental problems.

most dependable way of getting the most out of the oil America has to offer.

Atlantic Richfield and thousands of Americans who have invested with us believe that exploring undersea is important in reducing our dependence on foreign oil.

And that's something we can't afford to ignore.

## There are no easy answers.



AY ROCERS, a fifty-four-year-old chemist. has worked at Los Alamos since the glory days when Fermi spent his summers there and Teller popped in all the time and the folks at the lab were generally clued in to what was going to happen in science policy or the arms race before anybody else. Like Bob Dinegar, he works with explosives, trying to establish, for example, the margin of thermal safety for bombs being carried under the wing of a jet aircraft sprinting at Mach 3. He is gregarious and an incorrigible punster, and he looks like one of the Dutch Masters.

Ray and his wife, JoAnn, have decided that I need an intensive dose of northern New Mexico, so we set out one Sunday morning through the Rio Grande Valley and among the pueblos and then into the high country where dusty Spanish villages cling to cragged outcrops. "It's like another world plopped down in the middle of us," Rogers says, "but actually we're plopped down in the middle of them." The worlds remain apart. When we stop by the Santa Clara pueblo there isn't another white face in sight and everyone is either watching, or participating in, a deer dance, in the hope of unleashing snow.

The Santa Clara Indians are descendants of the Puye cliff dwellers who moved down from their great mesa in the thirteenth century when the climate cooled. (The Norsemen retreated from Greenland during the same period.) The vast ruins are still there, and the Indians still use the old ceremonial Puve kivas -bare, underground masonry caverns that can be entered only by a ladder from a small hole in the roof. As we watch the deer dance, caciques are up at Puve inside their kivas. meditating. The ruins, which Santa Clara owns, are closed to the public this Sunday, partly to avoid disturbing the caciques, partly so that, as one Indian explains, "you don't get snowed in."

The sentiment seems quaint until, as we head up into the mountains, past adobe houses hung with *ristras* of red chili peppers, some drops of rain are followed by snow flurries. "It's a very potent dance," Rogers explains.

"When I first heard about the shroud project, I didn't want to get involved," Rogers says. "I don't like being identified with the lunatic fringe. Then I was told about the 1532 fire and that changed my mind. It seemed to me that the fire was a beautiful little unintentional natural experiment. There was hardly any oxygen inside the casket and chemically

you knew just what was going on and kinds of thermal products were being behind. Thanks to the molten silver, you c calculate the temperature gradient inside casket. Knowing that, I figured that you o to be able to tell what effect the fire w have had on the image, if it was painted. The when I decided to join the team."

Rogers's aversion to projects on the lumfringe does not extend to projects that merely on the fringe. Although he has ear his livelihood as a chemist, he never gave his high-school fascination with archeole. He helped set up the first carbon-14 fac at the University of Arizona, still one of best in the world, and before that he dablin fluorine authentication. (The difference tween the fluorine content of the skull jawbone gave away Piltdown Man as a hin 1955.) He was part of the team that da the remains of "Midland Minnie," a 7,5 year-old Folsom Indian.

We have just passed the village of Trucl a mile and a half above sea level, and heading for an eighteenth-century church Las Trampas. Snow clouds are settling of the mountaintops. "It's a pretty harsh around here," Rogers says. "Life on the migin. This high, it takes corn 123 days to a ture, on average. The average time between frosts is 124 days. The only reason the Span came up here in the first place was became up here in the first place was became the Comanches were raiding in the valley at the governor of Santa Fe couldn't proteveryone. He gave the poorest families grain of land in the mountains in the 1750s."

Twelve families built the church at I Trampas in 1751 and the topography of thewn-beam floors was formed by the glac action of their feet and those of their descedants. Brilliantly painted retablos line twhitewashed walls inside. Primitive statupainted and sometimes dressed, peer out frobehind the altar. Here, as at the nearby shri of the Santuario (where grateful invalidate healed by the Holy Dirt, have hung the crutches and doctors' prescriptions), the i pression is one of idolatry and fetishism.

I am reminded, though, of a conversation once had with Fray Angelico Chavez, Franciscan historian and friend of my family (His roots in Santa Fe go back twelve generations, whereupon they skip to Spain.) "TI Spanish take all this stuff for granted," I told me. "We don't dwell on the penitentes of the Holy Dirt. It's you Anglos who have the curiosity about blood and ghosts and ido You're the ones who invented Frankenstein You're the ones who are so fascinated by the penitentes."

N THE LONG descent to the Rio Grande Ray Rogers is talking about the blood on a devotional artifact that has absorbed the attention of thirty Anglons for three years. "We all agree that s's blood on the shroud," he says. "We've d iron and protein in the blood areas, e found porphyrin, which is a constituent emoglobin, and we've even found what s like bilirubin in the places that have scorched. But then you say, so what? The most fascinating observation about the ge is the distribution of color, the fact that ist rests on top of the fibrils, and that are fibrils in the off-image areas that exactly like those that make up the image f. That suggests that what we're dealing is some change in the chemistry of the 1 itself. It has been 'aged.' For some reathe fibrils that make up the image got r faster than the rest of the fabric."

By aging," Rogers resumes, "I basically n losing water. The reason why there's an ge is because in those places and only e places the cellulose in the flax has been ydrated, giving you conjugated carbon ble bonds. I think everyone in STURP conthat the image is just degraded cellulose, there's actually nothing 'on' the linen.

ulose was degraded."

tising from the valley bottom on our left is ck Mesa. When the Spaniards came back New Mexico in 1692, after the Pueblo pellion, the San Onofre tribes fortified the and held out against the Reconquest for nths. Not long ago the rusted helmet of a quistador was found on a ledge. Rogers about the Reconquest before drifting k to cellulose, "There are any number of ys to degrade cellulose," he says, "apart m doing nothing and just letting it age. You bake it or burn it or irradiate it and proe a scorch; or, you can add something to that will soil it or alter it chemically. The blem with chemically induced aging is that can't find anything on the shroud to acant for it. We've spot tested with reagents king for likely materials. Mass spectromy, conducted at the University of Nebraska, ted for aloes, myrrh, oils, and so on-things it might produce some kind of contact ime. Everything came out negative. You'd ink we would have found something. I mean es, for example, has a bunch of glycosides it that should stand out like a sore thumb. nd these tests are sensitive. We picked up ices of the polythene bag the threads were apped in.

"A scorch seems a bit more promising. If a

scorch is produced at moderate temperatures, the predominant result is creation of conjugated double bonds, which is what we have. Roger and Marion Gilbert say the reflectance and fluorescence curves of the image and the areas burned in 1532 are similar, although under ultraviolet light the scorches and the image behave differently. That's a minus. There's still the problem of actually making the image, even if it is a scorch. The image is too sharp and too uniform for any of the hot statue theories. I incline toward the idea of a scorch, but I can't think how it was done. At this point you either keep looking for the mechanism or start getting mystical."

Rogers has pulled the car onto a long corduroy road that curls between two of Los Alamos's fingers. High up in the tuff are caves dug from the soft cliff face by the Indians, where you can ramble for an afternoon and still find corncobs and animal bones left over from a meal and ancient bits of rope. We climb among pitted ravines and scrub brush to the site of an unexcavated Otowi pueblo.

Rogers stands on a little mound.

'Those circular depressions over there would be classical kivas," he says. "The roofs have fallen in but they've kept their shape. Do you know what collapsed kivas are good for? They're good for snakes." He jumps down and saunters about, picking up fragments of pottery and bits of flint, explaining something about them, then putting them back. In several places intruders have been digging, in carefree violation of the Antiquities Act of 1906. The sky is darkening rapidly as we pick our way back to the road. "We may never figure out how the cellulose was altered," Rogers says finally, "but the process seems to have stopped. The rest of the cloth is continuing to age naturally. In relation to the background the image is getting dimmer and dimmer all the time. Someday the aging fabric is going to catch up with it and obliterate it."

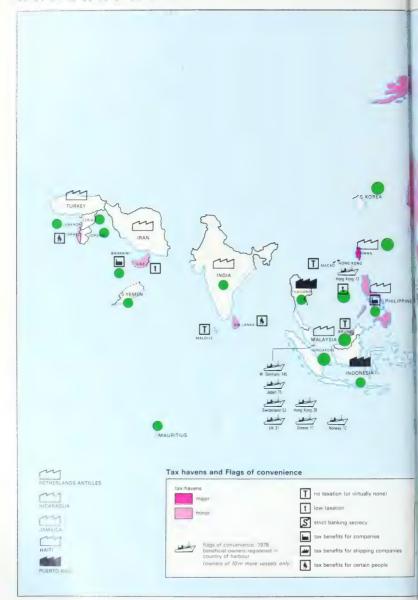
Above us, the orange mesa has held onto the sun, soaking in the last photons as if prepared to keep on glowing for an hour after dark. "I always get a haunting feeling down here," says Rogers. "It must have been a likable people who chose such a pretty spot to live." They chose it a thousand years ago. They didn't add anything to it or take anything away from it, but just altered the topmost fibrils of the earth, turning its mud into sepia-colored bricks and creating, for a time, the image of a city, its features sharply defined, three-dimensional, seamless in its hue—until eventually the earth caught up with it and took it back.

Nature doesn't stop, not even for miracles. □

"When I first heard about the shroud project, I didn't want to get involved," Rogers says. "I don't like being identified with the lunatic fringe."

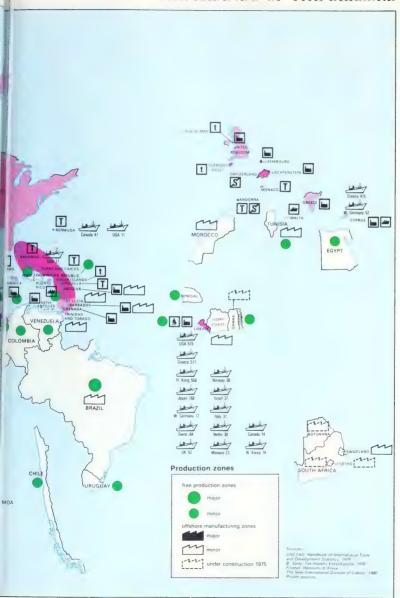
HARPER'S NOVEMBER 1981

## GEOGRAPHY 105



Geography 105 will offer a different view of the world each month. From The State of the World Atlas, by Michael Kid

### THE ISLANDS OF THE BLESSED



Ronald Segal, published by Simon & Schuster. Map copyright 1981 by Pluto Press Limited.

### ARS POLITICA

A JAMES WATT NATIONAL PARK by Steve Brod COASTER THE GREAT C LEAR VISIT THE TALLSHIPS GIANT DLIFE REFUGE RIFLERANGE

## INTERIOR, THE STUDIO, MORNING LIGHT

story

by Jeremy Larner

WAS READING Dust Krosley's script again when Judi buzzed me and said McKenzie had arrived and wanted me in his office.

It was my habit to read a little of Kros's script the first thing every morning.

Dust Krosley himself was planted in the er office, smiling that shy, sour smile of his. ot a close-up of his delicate eyelids fluttering teath rimless glasses, his beaten-up hands, ten-down nails.

'Dust!" I yelled. "Dust from the desert!" found it best in this town to exclaim one's husiasms.

"Hello, Peter," said Dust, "Say-"

"Parker." I said. "Parker Peters."

"Say," said Dust. He was waving a leathbound book he'd picked up off our shelves. Ias McKenzie really done twelve films?"

"You read German?" I said.

"Enough." I left him there, holding the book as if it are a package of excrement, and passed on the inner office. Mac was listening on the one and staring out the window.

"Bring it around to the house at seven," he id. "The platinum." He hung up, beckoned e. I joined him in a mental two-shot. A widelegle lens zoomed past us, through the winw, and down the studio block to a candyked Maserati. The car gave off grains of
ickly light.

"What do you think?" McKenzie said, his nooth face as always too close.

"It does catch the eye," I said, "if that's

hat you want."

"You know what I'm asking, little prick!" le prodded my shoulder joint with his elbow. "It's conspicuous," I said.

"I don't know about conspicuous," Mclenzie said, "but it sure as hell is out of lace." I took my position on his short couch by the corner table with its own phone and the pile of spiral-bound scripts.

"Parker, I want you to stay here while I deal with old Dust."

"Why me?"

"You say something bright, he rattles on, he leaves feeling better."

"I'd like him to feel better," I said. "On account of his script."

"Yeah, yeah, I know," said McKenzie. "You like good reading, don't you, Parker kid?"

"Make some kind of thing someday," I ventured. I wanted for my own sake to have said that.

"Yeah, right, Parker," McKenzie said. "For eighteen mil with no stars."

"Read it?" I asked.

He grinned. He liked being pushed at certain times.

"I glanced at it. What kind of question's that?" He sat down with his arm around me, kneading my bicep.

"Just wonder where your head's at."

"I saw what I had to see."

I got up and did a little circle, which left him standing up and me sitting down again with some breathing space.

"I just wish it weren't Dust," I said. "I used to idolize Dust. I taught a seminar where we did *The Streetwalker* frame by frame."

"How come you never asked me to your seminar?"

"We did."

"Did I come?"

"It's hard to say," I said.

He snorted. "I idolized him too," he said. "When did you stop?"

"When he came to work for me."

"I know what you mean."

"I doubt it." McKenzie said.

Jeremy Larner won an Academy Award in 1973 for his screen-play for The Candidate. He has written short stories and articles for Harper's and other magazines, and is currently working on a novel.

Jeremy Larner
INTERIOR.
THE STUDIO.
MORNING

E PRESSED a button and spoke to Denni, covering for Judi. Dust Krosley came in doing a Bogart walk plus thirty pounds. He nodded to McKenzie, who sat watching him for a moment and made no move. Krosley lit a cigarette and let it hang from his chewed lips. He slowly surveyed the office, panning from one object to the next—the stills from Mac's films; the casual snaps of Mac with stars on the Via Veneto, in a rice paddy or with wives at some bright cottage; bound and gold-stamped shooting scripts; formal photographs of cars; barbells; a jacuzzi. I could see them detonate under Dust's gaze.

Dust waved out his match and tossed it on the floor, held up the German book and shook it at McKenzie. "They go into every picture," he said, "like it was a Henry James novel." Dust's voice had a burr; it seratched every-

thing he spoke about,

"Kind of gets you, doesn't it, Dusty boy?" McKenzie closed on him and grabbed his hand. They were the same size, the same age. Dust had on a suit and tie like my professors once wore. McKenzie had put on his pleated lounge pants and a suede-and-terry pullover. His lucite heels caught a gleam from the window.

The touch of their hands seemed to neutralize them. A beat passed as they stood in stop motion. I was using my telephoto lens; I wanted to get back, back, as far as I could go. Then Judi broke the frame, bringing in a special cartridge belt Mac had ordered. Judi is always on uppers and now she was tripping on how she'd tracked down this new thing for McKenzie and how it looked on him. Dust's look hit her right in the teeth and broke off. She'd never detonate, didn't even know he had eyes.

Mac carefully tried on the belt and asked me what I thought. I commented. Dust rumbled how one couldn't be too careful when it came to cartridge belts. McKenzie turned this way and that, continuing to examine the belt as he took a call. Judi got our orders for coffee, still not encountering Dust's gaze. McKenzie whacked down the phone and turned to get it over with.

"Dust," he said, "you wrote a helluva script.

Hit the ball out of the park."

"Oh," Dust said. He struggled to suppress a smile. "Well, that's news. Coming from you. Of course I've had three months to show it to people I respect."

McKenzie put his fingers together thoughtfully. "There's no doubt but that you are one of the great living screenwriters. I'd say that without hesitation to anyone."

"I didn't really come here for reificatio "Reification!" McKenzie laughed. "This kills me." Judi brought in coffee for Dust

we and mineral water for Mac. Judi said s been thinking how she loved the cartridge

"Girl meets cartridge belt," said Dus me from the side of his mouth.

"I thought it was delicate," I said, "the you sketched in the business with the won Much more believable than in the novel."

"It wasn't in the novel," he said. "Di you read it? That's all original."

"It seems better to have them knowing another than meeting," I said, showing ag I really had read it.

"Well, it cuts the nonsense about the of his dreams. He knows her as someone talk to, a waitress in a diner late at night-

"I know," I said. In the background l
Kenzie stared out the window.

"At first," said Dust, "it's carried by r ging, teasing. A kind of protected intimac

"Unacknowledged," I said.
"She takes him by surprise. When she tu
up at the lake, suddenly they're right

"And it collapses," I said. "He can't ta it." I liked Dust tremendously. His round fa was swelling against the metal sides of glasses.

"But he struggles back," said Dust. "I knows he's lacking something."

"That's why you like him."

"In the novel," said Dust, "they do change. The woman is a gimmick. I wanted movie where you see two people in the sar frame affecting each other. You never see thanymore."

"Though people—" I started to say. B

"That suit." said McKenzie. "When yo went to college, Dust, did you wear a suit lilthis?"

Dust shook his head.

"The fraternity boys did," McKenzie sai He expertly fingered the lapels, adjusted the roll, lifted the shoulder line.

"There weren't any fraternities."

"A charcoal suit. I haven't seen one in long time. I bet you wore..." He stopped think.

"People talk about their so-called relation ships all day long," I said, getting back to the script.

"Exactly," said Dust. "But in the movies

you never see-"

"Chinos," Mac said, "cuffs around you ankles, desert boots, white socks, white but ton-down broadcloth shirt. No. not deser boots. Wing tips. Make that a pink shirt." You wore a charcoal suit," I said to

Iac laughed, he poked Dust. Dust laughed fly. Mac came over and poked me.

It's about just what fascinates people," It said loudly. "What they're crazy lookfor. That's why"—he swallowed, I could him bunching himself—"that's why it's to be, um, to be very big commercially."

CKENZIE STROLLED about as Dust Krosley said his piece, recited a speech he'd made up about matters he knew nothing about. Making nev in the movies.

inally, McKenzie said, "C'mon, Dust, sen your tie." He put his hand on Dust's

and Dust slapped it away.

VicKenzie shrugged. "I got fifty of those , I'm gonna get 'em in the mail to you lorrow."

'Naturally, Mac," said Dust. "I'd apprete any old clothes you can throw my way. t look. I put in ten months of my life, now 1 ready to do a final draft. All I need is 1 involvement."

"Ah, yeah!" said Mac. He poured himself re mineral water, looked at it carefully, ank it. His lips in close-up had a clean-edged

p on the glass.

"Well, listen, Dust. It's thought-provoking ff, as I said. Some quibbles here and there, the people want gimmicky women, maybe it's why the book sold. Do we go to the wies for the same kind of bullshit we get ound the house? I don't know. Anyhow we agree it's fine writing. Parker here's gonna his Ph.D. on the damn thing. But you know sold you from the beginning, even with my ssion for the novel, I eventually had to work t my priorities."

"You told me," Dust said, "we'd make a

eat picture."

"Everyone sets out to make a great picture."
"The big chance," Dust said. "You tied me a whole weekend telling me how both of were ready to take the big chance. You uldn't do it without me, remember? The ly one? The perfect team? That Japanese iffet breakfast on your boat with the stomachrning seaweed eggs?"

"The fact is, I've got to do a picture with

aul Newman."

"You don't have to."

"I'm going to."
"That rodeo garbage?"

"That rodeo garbage?"
"It won't be garbage."

"I read the book, I read the script, they ere written by a team of hack cretins."

I lit a cigarette, enjoying the precision of it. "Anyhow we all

"Every man's entitled to his opinion," Mc-Kenzie said. He sat on the edge of his desk, idly swinging a golf putter. Dust went on talking, his head wrenched oddly around toward me, as I studied my cigarette.

"Of course I read it in the papers a week ago. After three months without a word. My stomach dropped out, you know? It was that here-it-is feeling, when you realize you've known all along."

"Um-hmm," said McKenzie. Without moving his behind from the edge of the desk, he shifted the grip on his putter, gave a perfect indication of a top golfer lining up a putt.

"I knew it," Dust said, "that day when we supposedly talked about the first draft. We sat on the beach to improve your tan. We jogged, we swam, we ate, we drank—"

"I got you a towel."

"Thanks. You told me about your wife, your shrink, and your love life, such as it is. You were vaguely dissatisfied with my work, it was great of course, you just couldn't pin down what bothered you. That was up to me. It was my script, never our script. All day long you looked at it only twice. You read me some long garbage from the book. You read like a first-grader, by the way, but I was polite, I'm always polite till it's too late. I had put too much of myself into it even then—"

"You can always put more."

"That's nice to know, I had already put enough so I didn't want to admit what was happening, I went home and thought about

"And I came up with one more twist, which meant I had to change everything. It was as much work as starting from scratch. I even worked in that story you told me about your

"Anyhow we all agree it's fine writing. . . . But you know I told you from the beginning, even with my passion for the novel, I eventually had to work out my priorities."



Jeremy Larner
INTERIOR.
THE STUDIO,
MORNING
LIGHT

ironic little thing with Countess what-the-fuck's-her-name."

Dust paused, held his head in his hands. "And I made it work, too." He brought his

head up. "Didn't I make it work?"

"It has serious problems." McKenzie said.

"Compared to, say, your rodeo shuck?"
"Look, Dust, I'm willing to sit all day and listen to your abuse, but what can I tell you? What do you want me to say? Your thing is better? Okay, it's better. But I don't see it as a moyie. The big guys upstairs would be more

"What the hell do you expect? They're

wrong! We can prove it!"

McKenzie shrugged his mouth. Dust was wild, my boss was handling him, the words didn't matter, and I was getting the master shot from a platform fifty feet out the window.

"I wouldn't doubt it," McKenzie said. "The point is, they have to choose, just like you

and me."

blunt."

"You told me Newman was getting impossible."

"Not impossible."

"You thought you'd done everything, now you want something that will stand up."

"Did I ever say I wasn't a profit-making

commercial film director?"

Filtered air, hazy shadows in the room. McKenzie lets the silence build, toys with his putter, glances at Krosley's face. We see Dust's flesh drawn down from the eyes and pouched over the cheekbones. The pouches tremble. Dust's red veins cause Mac to frown: alcohol poisoning. Mac then brings the hint of a generous smile to his face, pulling a slight dimple into one taut cheek. The phone rings, Mac lets it ring, a sign the movie is nearly over. At the corner table, my own hand reaches to punch down a blinking clear button. I lift the receiver and murmur into the phone, my mouth concealed by my whitened knuckles. No one hears what I say.

"All right," says Dust quietly. "Let's get it clear. You think the script has no merit."

"You're playing games with me, Dust."

"You think it lacks . . . what?"

McKenzie stands, moves over to Dust, looking down on his unkempt head.

"You don't believe it, Dust, but I'm sorry, I'm abjectly sorry, I will apologize before millions. The simple fact is I've elected to do another project. Also I had no way of knowier."

"It's a love story with suspense, danger."
Dust said these words as if pushing them out
of his mouth. His lips puckered in distaste.
"How commercial can you get?"

"It has incredible fucking possibilities,"

my voice came.

"You can still get it going," McKenzie sa.
"Talk to your agent."

Dust hung on. "Did you tell the stagus don't bother? Did you show it to that all?"

"I'm telling you, call your agent."

"You could have said to them, 'Hey, r this! We're gonna do it!' These guys d know how to read anyhow. They know c what they hear."

"Don't kid yourself," said McKenzie mil-In his loose, graceful way, he lined up imaginary putt, ready to hole out on the ei

teenth green of this conversation.

"Listen to me, you candy-assed baby!"

HAD TURNED from my camera to atte another cigarette, and in that mom Dust launched himself. I looked up McKenzie went back sprawling into long couch. Dust Krosley stood over hibrandishing the putter. He shook it my whis face livid and distorted over his should "Stay in your corner, cutey! Or I'll kno your teeth in!"

"I have no intention," I assured him. "I"Shut up!" Dust slammed the putter on t
coffee table, shattering the glass. He raised t
putter over McKenzie. His shoulders stretch
massively beneath his padless Ivy jacket. I
head was engorged, bullet-shaped against t
window. I came in tight on my boss: M
gazing in melodramatic terror, crawling bac
ward into the cushions, one hand flung u
ward to ward off a blow. But on his face
crimson glow blossomed through his tan. H
lips were frozen in a girlish grin. He w
thrilled.

Judi came in and McKenzie waved her of again.

Dust snapped the putter over his thigh. I slow motion his stubby hand reached down clamped McKenzie by the collar, and dragge him up from his couch. The seam of Mac pullover gave with a feeble hiss. Silhouette in green window light, Dust pushed the broke shaft of the putter close to McKenzie's face

"I oughta twist this up your ass!"

He thrust McKenzie down, let go of him McKenzie caught himself, palms against th carpet, looked up at me across the room. Fo one panicky moment I saw myself fired. The I focused on a face that was unmistakable exultant.

Dust removed the glasses hanging from one ear. He put his hiking boot on the remains of the coffee table. McKenzie sat on the floor He sneaked a look at Dust, then ran his hand

his own pleated thigh and held it to his He was marveling at the smell of his sweat.

ow you sit there and listen!"

:Kenzie's face went slack with disappoint. Dust was only going to make a speech. enzie began to massage his leg, which

ipparently gone pins and needles. ist's voice growled away, Bogarting.

ou're yellow, Mac, that's one little reavhy you're not a great director—and you 'it, too, don't you know it by now? You're ng for class but you don't have the guts ecide what you want and stick with it. pick up ten, twenty thousand supposedly loping' the script—"

'eanuts!" said McKenzie loudly.

on, "with seven suckers spilling their each one thinking he's got a picture in works! Then when you really have to t, you go into a panic, scurry around and ten different writers to patch the script. use you're yellow. You go into the picture a script in patches and you wheedle and 1 and coax something out of the actors. 't's what you're good at, Mac. That's how make your money, that's why you get

your deals—because of what you squeeze out "That's right,' of other people's talents!" said McKenzie

Abrupily McKenzie got up, walked to Dust, and stood in front of him. He pulled himself straight, he was the same height as Dust again. Dust had to stop talking. McKenzie shook slightly; his hands quivered at his thighs. Involuntarily Dust's arm jerked up into the hazy light. I thought he would bury his fist in Mac's wide-open belly. But he only held it across his own gut, as a barrier.

"What else?" Mac said.

Dust didn't answer; he turned away, began to walk around the room, thoughtfully. Mc-Kenzie sat behind his desk again, folded his arms. In a minute Mac's eyes were gone once more, out the window.

Dust's shoes crunched in the carpet: they came to a stop.

"So I broke my balls for you."

Mac blinked.

"What's the matter, run out of attention span? I broke my balls for you. Know what I mean?"

Yanking open his belt, Krosley stepped toward McKenzie. He dropped his pants. His hand cupped his testicles. A sunbeam bathed them in hairless aura.



"That's right," said McKenzie's voice. 'It's nothing personal.'" Jeremy Larner
INTERIOR.
THE STUDIO.
MORNING

"I'll put them on your desk and you can step on them. Smash them with your telephone."

"No, no," a voice moaned. It was my own. Annoyance flickered across McKenzie's face. He turned his head a quarter turn in my direction. "It's not necessary," he said.

Mac's head remained at that angle, halfprofiled, as Dust Krosley said, "Here's your chance." The balls moved forward and at his angle McKenzie could see them from the corner of his eye, settling on his desk.

On McKenzie's face there was a registration of Krosley closing in on him again, flickerings of butterflies dancing in the little muscles of Mac's eyebrows and along his cheekline. That glow again, beneath the tan. There was a blur of something soft and fleshy slapping McKenzie across the neck. A second camera would have caught it clearly.

VERLAY MY Boss's eyelids, parting to a blurred vision of Dust Krosley backing away. Dust pulls up his pants, stands holding the halves of his unzippered fly. He, too, is in shock. The walls of the room shimmer like the bottom of a swimming pool.

McKenzie rolls his eyes, instinctively looking for a focus. A photo on the wall resolves itself: the internationally known director receiving an award at Lucerne. Mac's face clarifies, sharpens.

"For God's sake, get your pants together!" The words rasp in Mac's throat and he breaks

out coughing.

"For you," Dust repeats. He zips up his pants. He opens his mouth again but there is nothing more to say. The air goes out of him with a whoosh. He resumes normal size. He sits. He wipes his knobby forehead with the sleeve of his charcoal jacket.

The phone rings unevenly.

"I broke my balls for you," croaks Krosley, as if a gear had slipped one final turn and tripped that lever.

My own sleek head leans forward, wanting

"Why. Dust? Why did you?"

"I don't know." Dust's voice is high and dreamy, like a sad small boy's. "I wanted to make a real movie."

McKenzie's forearm jerks along his neck, rubbing warmth into a stripe of cold. He rises, pulling the parts of himself together, stands once more by the window.

"I thought he'd help," Dust said. "I kind

HARPER'S of liked him."

"I don't know how you do it," Mac's voice

came. "I wouldn't be a screenwriter for

From my corner angle through the win I caught this time the shaded end of Maserati. It was then Mac must have know'd get another one to drive, leave the calfake in front of his house, have his gaffe a spotlight for night.

Dust found a few concluding words, we he spoke to me. "It's all my own fault."

said "Isn't it?"

"It isn't anyone's fault," I told him.

"That's right," said McKenzie's voice. nothing personal."

Dust gathered up the tacky briefcase had carried all his life. He shuffled to the d like an old schoolteacher.

McKenzie stepped right behind him, to ing over him to prevent a reentry.

At the door, Dust turned. I caught a fment of his mouth and one eye as he pee up at McKenzie.

"Maybe," Dust whined, "when you through with the Newman picture . . ."

McKenzie took Dust's limp arm and pelled him out the door. McKenzie's verolled in from the outer office.

"Well, old Dust, you got paid sixty the

sand!"

Dust's answer faded like the whisper of falling leaf. "I didn't do it for the mone

Mac closed the door and stepped back the office. He exhaled totally, pulled in all-new breath. "You'll never make it, Parke he said to me.

Mac opened the fridge under his desk a took his noon vitamins with grapefruit jui

"I'm going for my workout and a saunhe said. "The poor ignorant paranoid a hole!"

"Ain't it the truth," my voice replied.

"They're all the same."

I saw my boss take up his hat and his s

driving gloves.

"Work up your notes on the rodeo rewr and I'll look 'em over on the plane. Ha Judi call Newman's secretary and find out t limo contact for the Maui airport. I'm gon have to go out and watch Paul's deep-s number and listen to his tapes and spend tl goddamn weekend rubbing my nose in h rosy ass."

Then I saw that glow buzz in his cheeks at he started for the door with the glow st buzzing, but one final thought stopped M Kenzie in his tracks.

"Life is horseshit," he told me, and on th note he made his exit.

"Not life," murmured my own dear voic drowned in applause as the credits rolled.

HARPER'S NOVEMBER 1981

## ONE SUMMER NIGHT

n a camera

by Michelangelo Antonioni

SLEPT very little in those days.
I had gotten into the habit of going to bed as soon as the day's slow fade-in began. Going to bed tlawn has at least one advantage: day is well spent—asleep. When is resting, what else matters?

is resting, what else matters? was at Merano finishing up The al of Maria Tarnowska, a screeny I was doing with Luchino Visti. Four exhausting months in a el room where Luchino kept us ler lock and key, prisoners. Guido vene, Antonio Pietrangeli, and self. At Merano I had made three ruds. I could relax with them; we er had to worry about anything, three friends were a very young I from Udine named Sandra, a anty-four-year-old German woman om everybody called Grethe but ose name wasn't Grethe, and an

ose name wasn't Grethe, and an nerican captain whose age was out thirty-six. We had very little common, but for us that little was great deal: the need to invent our enings, and the feeling of brutishst hat seized and dazed us into e small hours.

The story I am about to tell conrns one of those evenings. I tell because it has remained in my emory like a film, the kind of film I have always wanted to make but have never been able to, a mechanism not of facts but of moments that speak of the secret tensions in those facts, as flowers reveal the tensions in a tree. I tell the story because it was an evening controlled by invisible glances. In short, it was an unexpressed tragedy. The characters of a tragedy, the setting, the air that is breathed there, the moments that precede and follow it, when the act is irrevocable but unspoken-all these are more fascinating to me than the tragedy itself. The tragic act makes me uneasy. It is abnormal, excessive, shameless, It



should never occur in the presence of witnesses. In reality and in fiction, it excludes me.

HE FOUR of us are in a jeep heading for the border. The jeep is moving very fast. Night has fallen. The headlights shine on houses with wooden balconies full of geraniums and every now and then a cross appears. Long stretches of the road are stony and dusty. Rocks spring into view where the asphalt ends, and a dry wind lifts the dust and drops it on our hair. The captain drives in silence, The rest of us look at the shadows thrown by the headlights. The gaiety we felt a little while ago has vanished, overwhelmed by a silence that would seem inexplicable were it not for the fact that we're approaching the border, and borders always command a little respect. Or rather they make us cautious, especially at night.

Only when the jeep slows down and stops in front of an isolated house do we stir. The door is open; the interior is illuminated by a fierce light. "Gasthaus?" asks the captain. "Ja, Gasthaus," answers the man at the door. He is young, blond, very young. Even though I don't know the language, his tone sounds false to me. His is an answer in spite of itself. "Okay," says the captain.

ichelangelo Antonioni, whose most recent m is The Oberwald Mystery, lives in ome. This article was translated by Lawnce Venuti.

Grethe has jumped down from the ieep. She has a lean, elastic body. One would think that she spends hours exercising or dancing to be so supple. When I asked her about it. she answered me with another question: "What do you think?" Strange girl. I see her exchange a glance with the blond young man and then look around. There are other houses; none is lit. She looks at them as if they were listening. Behind the young man another has appeared in the doorway, a much older one with a drooping mustache. He is fat, enormous. Against the light he seems the gigantic, threatening shadow of the first man. He looks at the captain, who has moved to go inside, but doesn't budge an inch.

"Excuse me," says the captain. He speaks with a heavy American accent. The two men don't move. The captain looks at them, astonished. His capacity for being surprised by everything makes him sympathetic, neutralizes the distance from which he, an American, regards us. Grethe goes over and says something in German. The two men

move aside.

As soon as we go in, Sandra begins to laugh for no apparent reason as she pokes about the place. When she walks, she rocks on her legs like a little girl who wants to be noticed but only makes a nuisance of herself. The blond man appears before her, somewhat impatient, and directs her to a small room that the captain has already entered. I hear him saying loudly, "Eat... essen."

He is trying to sound cheerful but produces the opposite effect. Grethe, in fact, becomes serious: cheerfulness doesn't suit her much. She is very beautiful when she is serious, and she is often so. She collects her thoughts, turns in upon herself, or simply withdraws-in other words, she becomes distracted. and then one can't understand what she is looking at or why. The first time I saw her she had a bunch of flowers in her hand and suddenly she offered me them. I didn't know what to do with them and said so. I also pointed out to her, rather rudely, that mountain flowers have no smell. Flowers are more beautiful to look at than to smell," she objected, and turned away from me. One of her moods had fallen on her.

■HE WALLS of the small room where we sit down are paneled in natural wood, and the tables and chairs are of the same material. There is also a porcelain stove with a bench around it, underneath an overhanging bunk. It is so typical that I would like to leave. I am not fond of the Tyrolean style. The captain, however, seems right at home. He orders sausage, prosciutto, bacon, beer, and numpernickel. The blond man writes the order on a pad and disappears. I draw closer to Grethe. I have something very Italian in mind: making her drink beer and then taking advantage of her. But the thought vanishes as soon as she turns around to explain to me: "This is Andreas Hofer's house. Do you know who he is?" I do know. He was a Tyrolean patriot who was shot in Mantua after being denounced. I know another detail: the informer's name was Schraffl, which is also the name of the man who owns the inn. But I don't know if it's the fat one who's the owner. He has the appearance of a man involved in the sorrow that must pervade the inn because of that name.

The house has aged well. The wooden interior offsets the bright exterior walls, the window boxes filled with the usual geraniums, the sharply slanted black roof that dis-

solves into the black sky.

"Wait," Grethe says. She goes to meet the blond man as he comes back into the room. They exchange a few words, and then he opens a door, with Grethe behind him and me behind her. We enter a dark room. I hear the click of the light switch, and Andreas Hofer is there, in a corner, with a flag in his hand. It is a life-size painted wooden statue, so slick and shiny it seems made of wax, and, seeming waxen, seems like Andreas Hofer in person. On the walls are some faded newspaper clippings: Hofer making a speech, Hofer at a secret meeting, Hofer kneeling before a platoon of Napoleonic soldiers with blue uniform and very long rifles, in a squibarracks courtyard reminiscent of La Grande Illusion. In the rinthere is also a table, and on table is a visitors' book. Grethen the pen in my hand with the ranatural of her gestures and does notice that I put it back on the twithout signing. It is my perseprotest against the blond man, who consideration for us thrives on so diffidence.

Meanwhile, he has walked quid toward the door. Before he closes I catch a glimpse of two men passa with bulging backpacks slung or their shoulders. They are follow by a third, without a pack. The cloing and ruddy face of this last na betray his mountain origins, but other two have the pallor of or

people.

Even with the door closed we are hear Sandra and the captain laus ing. The blond young man keep hand on the doorknob and an de on Grethe, while following me was the other. He is thinking some scure thought about me. In square of the window, illuminat by the lamp at the entrance, I s the three men with the backpar moving away, stopping for a m ment, and then disappearing in the darkness. Hofer looms at r shoulder with the flag in his har Grethe stands beside me. I obser in her the same restless calm I fe More to break the silence than satisfy my curiosity, I ask: "Co traband?"

The blond man is wary of repling. I turn to Grethe, a little a noyed. "Listen, tell your countr man that the captain is America and doesn't give a damn about what happening in this place, and neith do I..."

She interrupts me. "He unde stands Italian very well."

"Fine."

I would like to add that I too have a certain interest in the subject of contraband: let me watch and may explain the details to me. It's a purely professional curiosity. At Meran I heard talk about this traffic i goods, and perhaps in men, thos who are escaping other men or

But I say nothing. I don't even the desire to talk to him.

HE DOOR to the room is pushed from outside; the blond man opens it. It's Sandra. "This dump must it least a century old," she says atiently, "but that's no reason take us wait another century to I'm hungry."

t last Grethe smiles and we all off to the dining room. We sit n in a corner, around a table re beer has been brought in our ence, I don't know by whom. The tain fills the tankards, raises his triumphal gesture, and then lets fall on the table. The tankard sn't break, but the beer splashes rywhere. The captain looks at us pily, as if he had only been waitfor the party to begin. Sandra es a napkin and starts cleaning table. Her bare arm passes in nt of Grethe several times, and ethe, with one of her more natil gestures, caresses it. Her gese is instinctive, gentle, and sensual the same time, a sensuality that ms to contain the sweetest sentient, like that of Bergman's three men in his stupendous Smiles of a mmer Night. It's such a discreet sture that it doesn't need to be mpleted, and, in fact, there isn't ne for it. Some mysterious presentient induces Grethe to interrupt her



some sounds from outside reach the table, making the bottles and glasses tinkle. We all jump. It sounded like a car backfring, or several cars, or perhaps it was a voice, or several voices, nearby or far, I couldn't even tell which. I do know that it (or they) had the same emotional charge as a scream.

Meanwhile the blond man has started for the door. He has opened it to go out, but he is forced to stop in his tracks. Some hurried footsteps are heard in the hallway. Someone must have told him to stay where he is. I have never seen a face more annoyed. No, he is more than annoyed—dejected. As if receiving an order in our presence were a humiliation. The captain takes advantage of the situation and points a finger at the young man. "You!" he says.

But he also stops. We seem to be waiting for the result of the noises. But they fade away without leaving a trace, and the silence returns to what ought to be a good silence, with some soft noises, like the wood creaking or the ticking of the clock, which heighten it. I look outside the window. I don't feel that this darkness belongs to a mountain night, dense and still like the mountains, an old, solemn night. Rather, I feel it may have been put there to hide something-who knows what: movements, gestures, expressions, thoughts-that we don't have the right to see and understand. The captain resumes in Italian: "What's this place called?" Grethe answers, "San Leonardo." "Like my uncle," exclaims Sandra.

Grethe leans her head back, revealing her throat, and says something to the blond man, who is by her shoulder. He answers and she translates. (But why didn't he speak Italian if he knew it?)

"He says we're thirty kilometers from the border."

HIRTY kilometers..." I start to say, thinking: that's a long way to walk. As if she had read my mind, Grethe explains that they stop in shepherds' huts and move on from there. There's no chance of being stopped and searched. Sandra makes disjointed

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gestures. "Humph...but why?..."
Her gestures and phrases are jerky.
All eyes are on her. "Why are we
talking about these things? Is the
prosciutto coming or not?"

Prosciutto, bacon, beer, and pumpernickel appear a few moments later, on two large platters placed in the middle of the table. The beer is bitter and goes straight to my head. The captain drinks it right down and urges Sandra to do the same. Sandra closes her eyes, takes a sip, and puts a hand on her chest, expecting a burn.

"It's so beautiful with all this foam..."

She dips her fingers in the tankard, scoops up a little foam, brings her fingers to her lips, and licks them with a grimace of disgust. "But I don't like it."

"What about wine? Do you like wine?" the captain asks. The idea of mixing the two flavors occurs to him. He laughs. It's all to make us believe that he's never had so much fun in his life. But only he is amused. He raises his wineglass to the light and looks at the tiny bubbles rapidly evaporating, a sign that the wine is genuine . . . A moment of suspense. Everyone's expecting him to drop the glass on the table again, but instead he gulps it down, smacks his lips, rolls his eyes, surveying us with a smile that does nothing but anticipate the banality of his remark, and says: "Kids, this is the life."

As soon as he says this, it's clear that he isn't referring to the wine but to our being there around that table at that moment, feeling on top of the world, or at the bottom—who knows—with those other people out there on the mountain, that woman...It is definitely a Conradian situation.

"Grethe," I whisper, "I can say something devoid of any criginality, but there's no escaping the fact that tonight we are the extras here. They are the protagonists [I point to the hallway]. Why don't we take up our discussion where we left off?"

"What discussion?"

"The one we were having in the jeep." I mentally allude to her leg leaning on mine.

"But we didn't say a word."

I look at her, disappointed, and she smiles, expecting me to continue. Instead, I look at the stove, the blue arabesques in the majolica that stop at the seams and jump over them as if they were fences, extending the pattern into the next tile. Suddenly I realize that I too am engaged in smuggling. I am smuggling a feeling for Grethe that I don't have. Yet isn't this what we do every blessed day of our lives, making some of our feelings recoverable for any eventuality?

The dining room door creaks. It closes. The young blond man has left. We hear more footsteps on the stairs, which are made of wood and therefore reverberate, more shuffling, and then the captain shouts, imperiously: "Open the door...aprire."

The door remains closed. The captain suddenly springs to his feet. He seems to do it against his will. as if it isn't like him to jump up like that. Three seconds later he is in the hallway. But here he finds himself right in front of the fat man, who makes an annoved gesture to drive him back to the dining room. With an agility no one could have thought him capable of, the captain sidesteps the man and plants himself in the middle of the hallway, determined to stay there, enchanted by what appears before his eyes. A woman is coming down the stairs. She is wearing a green scarf tied around her head, dark pants, and climbing boots. She is pale, and her



face looks worn. "And who's h woman?" asks the captain.

The two Austrians pretend thaven't heard him. The captain whis hands in his pockets and shis weight onto one foot, standlike someone who is prepared wait. Not that the men will and him—he knows very well they we —but rather for the change, for effect produced by the woman's trance on the scene.

HE WOMAN has stopped the last step. It's clear she is in a hurry to le and that the half-drunk restanding between her and the de is an obstacle that she's not sure be to deal with. But she isn't worr In fact she seems to be thinking t the situation isn't so serious after It could become serious, howele which is why she's hesitating. Wh the captain probably can't bear that indulgent glance she bestows. him, and he reacts as best he co summoning up all the savoir faire can muster. He makes a low bow says: "Eine Dame zum Plaisir."

From a man like him the remain sounds so odd that you can't whether it's an act of homage or awkward attempt to joke about being bent over for so long or an stinctive gesture of shyness. At a rate, he is in an uncomfortable potion, difficult to maintain. I exchange a glance with Grethe. We should to his aid, or Sandra should apper at the door of the dining room, F none of us makes a move: Sand because she's intimidated by sonthing she doesn't understand; Gret and I because, though we don't se it, we really want the captain to fall over so the woman can leave.

At this point, realizing he is waing shots, the captain changes histrategy. As is usual with people whare accustomed to drinking, he risfrom the bow completely in controf himself, turns toward me, arwinks, indicating the woman with a imperceptible nod. Thus he immedately enlists me as an ally in heause, forcing me to reconsider the situation along with him. There the woman, first of all. It's stranger of the st

I didn't notice her beauty be-Perhaps it's the way she's lookat him, with that pale shadow r her eyes setting her face in relief, and her erect figure, h makes me look at her in a

hat I don't understand is why endures the captain's provoca-Moreover, I have no clear sense hat she's thinking. From the way looks at us, she seems to guess all the forces she has challenged ght are united in us. We are the n, the daily routine; we are the conformity, even power. Or, simwe are ballbreakers. For us, on other hand, she is the unforeseen nent, the diversion. We need her give a meaning to our perfornce, as it were. We cannot let her ape. This is certainly what the tain wanted to convey when he

Grethe moves forward and stands ide me. I feel her gaze on me e an invitation to intervene. Grethe German and stares at the back of neck like a German. I take the otain by the arm and push him vard the dining room. He is docnow: I can entrust him to Sandra. hen I turn around, the woman is king to Grethe, Her voice strikes e as toneless, as if she is trying it to attract attention. It's a brief nversation, strangely confidential. ney say goodbye, squeezing each her's hands like two old friends. Once the woman has gone, we all

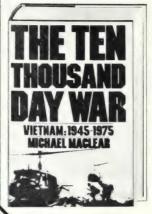
ther around the table again and egin to eat. But the situation has aanged. We have changed. The projutto, the bacon, the wine have a ifferent taste. I ask Grethe what she as talking to the woman about.

"Nothing. She's in trouble," she nswers gravely. I never get tired of ooking at her face. Every feature requires careful examination. The only hought that my gaze can extract rom her seriousness is unbearable to ne. That's why I jump when she gets ap about half an hour later. "Let's 20," she says.

We pay and leave. The man with the mustache accompanies us to the door and stops beside the blond man, who looks as though he's never moved. The captain sizes them up

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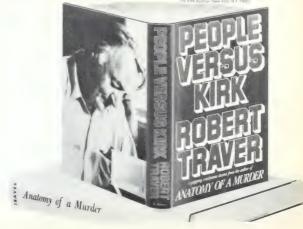
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with deliberate insolence. "What's the matter...," he starts to say in English. We shove him into the jeep and I get behind the wheel. The two Austrians look at us from the door without speaking, motionless. They are there even after I've turned the car around and driven onto the road. I'm sure they followed our headlights slipping along the trees and disappearing.

FTER a couple of kilometers we stop. The captain has seen trees full of apples at the top of the slope that flanks one side of the road, and he wants to pick some of them. We walk up a hill in silence but can't reach the orchard, which is still hidden by a thicket of larch trees. We enter a clearing just as the moon comes out. and the grass looks green again. A kilo of blue is more blue than half a kilo, Gauguin said. Here nature has applied tons of green. We cross the clearing, mainly from a need to move forward, to reach some other part of the forest. In front of us appears some seemingly impenetrable undergrowth. We brush past it for a short distance until we find an opening where a path begins. We set off along

For a path in the middle of the forest it's curiously straight, curiously exact, incluctable as the probably hostile multitude of trees that regard us with indifference. The moon filters through the branches, creating alternate zones of light and shadow, and we move on from light to shadow, for some reason trying not to make any noise.

The captain and Sandra very quickly abandon the path, with the excuse that the apples are in another part of the forest. Grethe and I continue. We will meet them back at the jeep. Some distant shots ring out, and their echo runs through the valley, leaving behind a vague sense of anguish. Anguish, not fear. Those shots were not intended for us. If I had a rifle, I too would have shot it, just to enter into the enigmatic atmosphere of this night. At a certain moment Grethe takes me by the arm and points to something among the

foliage. We draw nearer. At the edge of another clearing, narrower than the first one, there are two figures, a man and a woman, illuminated by the moon. I prefer the light of the day to that of the night, the dazzling light of the sun to that of the moon, no matter how suggestive the latter may be. But even though the figures are illuminated by the moon, the scene is not idyllic. It is a scene that would remind me of the park in Blow-Up if time hadn't reversed the order of the two events. Blow-Up was still to come.

The woman is the same one whom the captain tried to persuade not to leave the inn. I don't know the man. Never seen him before. He is thin, sure of himself, judging from his gestures. We hear her scarcely perceptible voice and, after a pause, his. They are about thirty yards apart, but they talk in quiet, whispery tones, as if they were standing face to face. Their voices alternate with perfect timing, without ever overlaping. I ask Grethe if she can catch what they're saying. "A few words. They're talking so softly."

Only now, at a distance of years, do I realize that I witnessed an event invented by chance with a precise and brilliant poetic intuition: an intimate, agonizing conversation between two people who are physically far apart. After a few minutes I hear a different kind of whisper, not in time with the others. It sounds like a sob. I look at Grethe: she is the one



who is crying. For the second in the course of the evening her action precedes what happens instant later. There is a gunshot closer than the ones we heard lier, but I can't say whether it the man who fired. This shot grows faint in the air of the valund we are hursed in silence.

The woman, however, is no lor where she was standing. The ma still there, but he suddenly mo He takes the longest time to cross clearing, and he stops for just as l to look down at the ground wh the woman was, where perhans still is, dead. But then he looks the place in the forest where woman could instead have fled. B hypotheses cross my mind. Since situation was so doubtful. I show have at least tried to reach the known man, to follow him. W didn't I do it? Why did I rem standing there, looking at the cleing, even after the man had dispeared and there was nothing else look at, as if the shivering grass the moonlight had prolonged event through the force of inerti-I recall that at that very moment certainty suddenly flashed throu my brain. There was absolutely reason in the world for us to be the in that place at that hour. We we two useless witnesses, and I was stinctively rebelling by standing the

I put an arm around Grethe's was with no intention but to comfort he (but why?), and I lead her to to jeep. The others are already sitting in it. Sandra is eating an apple, as it were breakfast time. The capta is a little dejected. His gaze is dusies yellowed the wing where have I read that phrase?

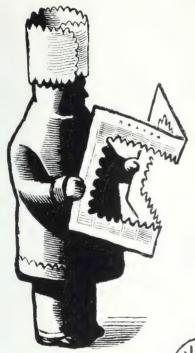
We set off again. Grethe's knagain touches mine, and that conta offers me a complicity so tender th I no longer have the desire to go bachome. I make a U turn and we goff in the opposite direction. Throad begins to descend, and I turn off the motor and the headlight Now we slide along the white uncertainty of the road, heading for the border, listening in the silent to the gravel grinding softly under the wheels.

HARPER'S/NOVEMBER 198

### THE MIND'S EYE

by David Suter

#### INTERNATIONAL TYPES



In Smolensk, learning of the Polish workers' movement.

In Teheran, a candid discussion of the current government.



### FIRST TIME OUT

The perils of the fictional debut

by Jeffrey B

Fabrications, by Adam Mars-Jones. 176 pages. Knopf, \$10.95.

Easy Travel to Other Planets, by Ted Mooney. 280 pages. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, \$11.95.

In a High Place, by Joanne Meschery, 320 pages, Simon and Schuster, \$14,25.

The difference is, that instead of dirt and poison, we have rather cross to fill our hives with honey and wax, thus furnishing mankind with the two noblest of things. which are sweetness and light.

—Jonathan Swift. The Battle

N OTHERWISE rational, realistic individual who chooses to spend months, years becoming the author of a first novel, when he could more easily and profitably be cursing the nation's illiteracy, tooling leather boots, peddling obiter dicta, or murdering wealthy dowagers, deserves to have his effort, if not his head, examined carefully.

Few endeavors have less going for them. If a first novel, after somehow overcoming the obstacles to getting published in the first place, manages to purloin a moment's critical notice among the self-helpers, the established names, and all the bookclub adjunct puffs, it rarely goes on to find readers gentle or numerous. The Three Sisters have been known to injure themselves in the close, quick work of dealing with such ephemera.

Jeffrey Burke writes the "In Print" column in monthly alternation with Frances TaliaSuccess itself is not a rosy prospect. More than forty years ago, in *Enemies of Promise*, the British critic Cyril Connolly sat back after a decade of writing about books and asked why so few survive:

Contemporary books do not keep. The quality in them which makes for their success is the first to



first pages of Enemies of Prohave a distinct immediacy, si thing that may be counted in "quality" which "is the first to That Connolly, as he says, is es peaches "on a sultry day" explihomely terms like "turn" and bad" in the quote above. Thou of literary mortality stand alone concern for his survival in a wi looking toward war. Aesthetic economic considerations weigh al equal as the book begins, and ( nolly goes on to express what seem in a critic an uncommon pathy for the difficulties of the

Before another decade past Connolly published, in 1945. Unquiet Grave, which has as its sentence:

The more books we read, th sooner we perceive that the tru function of a writer is to produc a masterpiece and that no other task is of any consequence.

Farther on, Connolly shows he ha, really lost his sympathy; but wimmediate in aftermath, has appently sharpened an understanda intellectual tendency. By corolla

nore books we read, the less are we have with anything short eatness.

r the first novel, then, things bleak indeed. One wonders why lose Nobel Prize-winners ever ared to write one.

spiring writers buy books and read reviews. They know the score and the odds. They've seen last year's autic literary event stacked high this year's remainder shelf. 've waited in vain for the afable paperback editions of books ted auspiciously enough in hardropromise at least that reve from oblivion. Then they'ved another sheet of paper into typewriter.

nowing the odds, I try not to k about that tap-tap-tapping most he time. I tried especially hard n I read six first novels for this mn and decided that three en't worth mentioning. And that of the remaining three wouldn't r rereading two, let alone ten, rs from now. And that the one k I had already begun recomding to friends was only outsing. Not a masterpiece.

abrications, by Adam Marses, is the fine achievement of a nty-seven-year-old Briton who es credit, in his biographical note, being educated at Westminster I Cambridge and for winning "the njamin C. Moomaw Prize for Oray, University of Virginia, 1981." e author's whimsy lurks smirking aind such juxtapositions, as it does aind the nonstandard disclaimer: he events and characters of this claimer are without exception titious; any resemblance to peras living or dead is purely coincintal." And more wit than whimsy ks with the title, as a final ornaent or impediment before the text oper, this seeming subtitle: "A irrago of Scurrilous Untruths."

Farrago is apt. The book consists two darkly comic novellas. The st, entitled "Hoosh-mi," tells how fictional approximation of the curnt Queen of England contracts bies and dies. Mars-Jones fleshes out the historical points of recognition in the sections outside the narrative that record a Dr. John Bull's insightful address to the Annual Dinner of the Republican Party on the subject of "Royalty and the Unreal." The author's wit and imagination support Dr. Bull's portentous theme by revealing private moments in the Queen's youth and young adulthood.

Where wit falters, Mars-Jones shows a weakness for the broad stroke. Subtlety yields to the typographical underscoring—emphasis doubly added—of a terrible pun like "divine right," referring to a punch thrown by the rabid Queen. Metaphor is allowed to race out of control, as in this analysis of the Queen's consort:

The nominal supreme stallion of the royal stud in fact ends up as a gelding; the Queen Bee's spouse has no option but to share her status as a drone.

Nevertheless, Mars-Jones takes his stylistic play seriously and intends his hoosh-mi-a nonsense word from the Oueen's youth that means "mixed food" or "disorderly jumble"-to be more than a game. Thus, if it is true of royalty, as Dr. Bull says, that "once an acknowledged artificiality has established itself, it tends to subject everything in sight," then the writer too must appear to be affected by creating an artificial distance between himself and the reader. Mars-Jones does this stylistically with parodies of clinical report, learned analysis, official memorandum, and other prose affectations. The gimmicks of shifting voices may sound excessive, but Mars-Jones suggests that he has merely succumbed to the inevitable: "The world tempts you towards full-time play-acting with its most bewitching displays of cardboard.

In the second novella, "Bathpool Park." Mars-Jones takes on the artificiality and cardboard characters of British justice by analyzing the various kinds of law that govern a murder trial. The criminal, a civilian still infatuated with the orderliness he found in military service, is so meticulous and self-justifying that he becomes a "law unto himself" and

"confronts the established order with its parody." After a trial and conviction, Mars-Jones discloses the grim farce of due process by having the prosecuting and defending attorneys explain the system in a seamless running dialogue that shows the supposed opponents to be interchangeably disinterested while it reveals the extent to which the facts of the case have been twisted by all parties involved.

The narrative voice of "Bathpool Park" shifts through a narrower spectrum than "Hoosh-mi," largely because legalese favors the monotone. For that reason, too, and for the pleasure of irreverence, the comic aspect of "Hoosh-mi" is stronger. But both are intellectually satisfying as comedies of stylistic mannerisms, in which the form takes on more substance than the content. Mars-Jones has written his "young" book; now he will have to settle on his own style and his own voice and find the story that bears both well.

N Easy Travel to Other Planets, Ted Mooney takes the risk of casting his first novel in the nottoo-distant future. The world is on the brink of going to war over Antarctica. "Information sickness" threatens to reach epidemic proportions. People are talking about a new emotion. And a small group of friends and relatives is wrestling with the old problems of work, love, sex, and death.

For the most part, Mooney's thoughtful treatment of the old problems prevents the novel from being reductively classed as science fiction. It must however, be taken on its own peculiar terms, which involve some of the symptoms of information sickness: "disconnected speech, apparent disorientation, and the desire to touch everything."

Thus, a page at the end of the book acknowledges quotations from reggae composer Bob Marley, Flaubert, John C. Lilly, Claude Lévi-Strauss, and Coleridge. The characters are fond of marijuana, which explains the stuttered logic in some of the dialogue. The narrative shifts frequently to follow the movements

of ten active characters—including a dolphin named Peter—while a gun makes its way among several of them as a not-so-subtle unifying thread that recalls the dramatic rule illustrated by Chekhov's Seagull. And then there is Peter, subject of advanced experiments to determine dolphin intelligence, justification for a variety of dolphinny facts and a long, archetypal dolphin fable, and lover—yes, sexually so—of his human mentor, Melissa.

Unfortunately, Mooney's bid for uniqueness began to try my patience. It's relatively easy to accept an Antarctic war or the extremities of information overload; and his "new emotion," perhaps a key to the novel, has the plausibility of a kind of psychological poetry while suggesting *Perelandra* and sounding like space' travel:

Jeffrey had the sudden vivid sense of being in a crowd—a crowd that, had there actually been one, would surely have been composed of creatures very much like himself. He felt as if they were all traveling together at an incredible speed, harmonious and oddly without movement.

But here, as elsewhere, Mooney's provocations only tantalize me into trying to figure him out. Distracted, I've lost sight of his characters' abortions, tumors, and dreams.

Mooney's vision of the future is just a bit too strange and his manner of conveying it too strained for such traditional themes as he pursues in Easy Travels: the difficulty of love, divided hearts, sudden death and slow dying, the responsibility of parenthood. And the disconnected nature of his novel is potentially as distracting to a reader as the novel's "reality" is to its characters. Those characters are trivialized in a way that has little to do with the pace and incoherence of Mooney's future.

I end up with an impression of a very talented writer whose next novel will be as serious in intention as this one but less strained in form, avoiding particularly small nonsense effects like: "Twenty feet away Peter made a noise like a cocktail party heard through waxed paper."

Meschery, looks deceptively simple and familiar. A recently divorced mother of three young children moves to a small town in the Sierra Nevada and tries to settle in. The novel covers a year in Lily Baldwin's life, from her partial responsibility for the death of a neighbor's son through her gradual loss of newcomer status and eventual acceptance by a small, closed community coping with the encroachments of slick Disney-resort developers.

The other main character, Deegan, runs a boardinghouse that leaves him free, at age fifty-five, to spend most of his time wandering around the town, drinking a bit, and weighing the perishable glow of the past against the dullness of the present: he thinks "high fences should be strung around certain memories." Deegan suggests John Wayne, but without the myth and nonsense.

It's hard to say whether Meschery's principal accomplishment is the variety and number of her insights—moments justly measured—the flowing richness of her storytelling, or the total absence of false notes, those jerks in conception or expression where the writer seems to have given up. I vote for the last because the others would diminish without it.

For example, there would have been many ways to pierce early the stern-to-hearty exterior of Deegan, who will be linked to the mother and her children for the rest of the novel. Meschery chooses the end of the day on which the Baldwins are caught in the mountains during the season's first snowstorm, lose the neighbor's boy, and are driven home by Deegan, who'd come with the rescue party. Lily is delirious in another room, the children have been chilled deep. Deegan sits on the edge of their bed and tells the story of a man lost in a similar storm who should have frozen to death. But

"the next morning Ferris came awake warm as toast. Still, he didn't see any daylight and he couldn't move.... But then slowly, quietly, the heaviness began to break away. Ferris sat up and saw bewers sliding off him in

every direction. They were I sleek in the sunshine with b tails broad as roofs. Old Fern had slept the night blanketed enormous beavers."

"Beavers?" John Paul said.
"Hush," Deegan said...the
turned and spread his arms on
the children as he squeezed b
tween them. The bed creaked ar
sank as he stretched out. "I thin
this is how the beavers did it
he said.

By the novel's happy ending, on see the hope of a future of Deegan has relieved himself of expectations. The community braces them as they embrace of A sweet warmth prevails as we look these unassuming lives.

My total enthusiasm for In a HyPlace bred a stronger than us
desire to retreat in critical selftection—i.e., to quibble. And thog
I couldn't fault Meschery, at lea
realized why I wanted to. With as
false move, the characters, stry
setting, and spirit of her book col
have dissolved into cliché. Anota
reader may find they have. I ha
she sets herself greater challenge

for and counsel these writers is because every respectable is novel arouses a desire for second, and intensifies a reaction have almost every time I pick upbook. The object, its aspectsname, a title, a colophon—call a mental picture of a man or woman at a desk, putting in weeks and months of work. With bad book, give the figure a wepaying extraliterary job that eventally dominates his time and terest.

But more and more often, we good books, the myriad nonmast pieces, one part of my mind is agreing with Connolly that such wor are granted but brief lives, even while that other part, with its imagined laborer tap-tap-tapping, can bear to think that his effort and howill be given short shrift. To judge and rely on masterpieces just see the easy way out of the dilemm.

HARPER'S/NOVEMBER 19

## SPOILS OF DEFEAT

tionalizing Vietnam

by Robert W. Tucker

→ HE SECOND wave of Vietnam revisionism is now upon us. The first, radical revisionism, made its appearance in the ddle to late 1960s. Although derately influential for several ars, especially among the young, lical revisionism is by now a spent re. (From the campus heroes of sterday, how many students today uld identify Carl Oglesby, say, or wid Horowitz?) But a conservae revisionism has arisen in its ace: its most notable expression s been given in the pages of Comentary magazine.

During the past year or two, the nservative challenge has gone om strength to strength. It enjoys e support of the president. Indeed, r. Reagan must be counted as a larter member of a club that was nee exclusive but is so no longer. Is declaration in the 1980 camning that Vietnam had been a label cause' was a faithful excression of long-held conviction. The reeded by many at the time with desion, even disbelief, the president's iew now finds increasing support.

Clearly, we are in for a new round f debates over the most debated and as most agonizing war we have ought in this century. Whatever the utcome, it is also clear that the again given to Vietnam remains lmost as important for Reagan's administration as it was for Carter's. In each case, the attitude taken toward the war tells us a good deal about the premises and aspirations of American foreign policy. Should

Robert W. Tucker is professor of political cience at Johns Hopkins University. His most recent book is The Purposes of American Power (Praeger). the conservative revisionism of yesterday, even today, become the conventional view of tomorrow, we might be looking toward a new era in the nation's relations with the world.

Revisionism implies an orthodoxy. What has been the conventional view of Vietnam? There is no simple answer. A considerable distance separates the view of the war that prevailed in the late 1960s from the view that prevailed during Carter's presidency. Even so, the successive phases of the orthodox position share a number of characteristics. Throughout, liberal and moderate critics have seen Vietnam as a mistake, although not as a crime. They have judged the intervention imprudent, but not immoral. And when methods employed in Vietnam elicited their moral censure, the war itself did not. It was radical revisionism that condemned the war on moral grounds. In the conventional view Vietnam appears first and foremost the result of intellectual error.

At the same time, the theme of intellectual error has found a number of expressions. In the earliest version, the mistake consisted in the failure to weigh properly the costs



of intervention against the interests at stake. By this reasoning, even a successful outcome of the war would have been too costly, considering our interests in Vietnam and in Southeast Asia generally. As George Ball and Hans Morgenthau insisted, the war was a mistake because it could not pass the test of a cost-benefit analysis.

benefit analysis.

The difficulty of this critique was that it did not really come to grips with the principal rationale for intervention. That rationale did not rest only, or even primarily, on the interests at stake in Southeast Asia. Instead, Vietnam was equated from the outset with the nation's global interests and commitments. The integrity of America's world position was made to depend on the outcome of the war. This was the logic that prompted the intervention in Vietnam and that led to an ever deeper involvement there. It was the familiar logic of global containment.

FEW liberal and moderate opponents of the war responded to this argument simply by dismissing it. For them, the consequences of defeat were either negligible or far less costly than continuing the war. (This is the view taken by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., for instance.) Most, however, responded by constructing a view of the world in which defeat would not matter. Those who had taken us into Vietnam and continued to insist on its "vitalness" had failed to see that we were now living in a new worlda far more complicated world than that of a generation earlier, but in some ways a much safer one.

Thus arose the now familiar argument of pluralism. Pluralism was, in essence, the triumph of nationalism. It maintained that communist expansion no langur carried the threat to America it had once carried. It also maintained that the prospects of Soviet expansion had dramatically declined. Indeed, a pluralistic world meant a more disorderly world. But for its advocates this seemed a reasonable price to pay if such a world also meant a marked decline in the need for military intervention.

Pluralism must be seen as the deus ex machina of the orthodox position on Vietnam. It allowed orthodox opponents of the war to reconcile the idea that American power had become overextended, of which Vietnam was the stark evidence, with their reluctance to face the implications that a contraction of our power might have. Presumably, pluralism set severe constraints on the utility of power-above all, of military power. But it also sharply reduced the need to employ military power in the manner of the past. If coldwar imperatives were now impossible to fulfill, they were also unnecessary; the attempt to fulfill them in a pluralistic world could only lead to the kind of disaster that was Vietnam.

It was left to the Carter administration and its supporters to make a virtue of the necessities imposed by this "new world." The highest goal of the Carter foreign policy—particularly as conceived by its high priest, Cyrus Vance—was avoiding any action that might incur the risks of using military power, because any use of military power raised the prospect of another Vietnam.

Not only was the Carter administration's version of the orthodoxy emerging from Vietnam a reductio ad absurdum; for them the war came close to being something more than a tragic mistake. Carterism intimated that failure in Vietnam was more than intellectual failure. Was it a moral failure as well? Mr. Carter would not say so explicitly. Yet this was the clear implication of more than one of his pronouncements on Vietnam. The same implication was conveyed by the penitent air he and

many of his associates adopted toward the war, suggesting a sense of guilt arising from the conviction of wrongdoing. By the late 1970s, the principal spokesmen for Vietnam orthodoxy had moved far from the beliefs of their predecessors.

● HE STARTING point of Vietnam revisionism-and, as we shall see, the end as wellis not the war itself but the policy that led to our intervention there. The conventional view on this has always been ambivalent at best. No such ambivalence marks the conservative outlook Whatever the other differences conservative revisionists might have, they are as one in their support of the policy of global containment. This being so, the intervention is given positive moral sanction. Undertaken in order to contain communism, the war was, in the words of Ronald Reagan, a noble cause. In this decisive respect, the outlook of conservative revisionism is nothing so much as the outlook of liberalism before Vietnam.

The nobility of our cause apart, was Vietnam a mistake nevertheless, given the circumstances attending this particular application of containment? The question is answered in different ways. Some revisionists -for example, Norman Podhoretzapparently believe that however sound in principle the policy of global containment may be, its application in Vietnam was imprudent. In the manner of the early liberal critics, these revisionists consider the risks of intervening to have been disproportionate to the interests at stake in Southeast Asia. But, again, this sort of calculation is quite alien to the policy prompting our intervention. It does not respond to the logic of global containment, a logic that, in the case of Vietnam, never rested simply on the interests there or in Southeast Asia.

It is not the wisdom of intervening in Vietnam that draws the attention of revisionists but the causes and consequences of our failure. Why were we defeated in Vietnam? The revisionists single out the antiwar movement. To be sure, many blame the military conduct of he war as well, but this remains it ordinate Desnite the failure of he American military establishmen fashion force structures suited to combat in Vietnam and to deven appropriate military methods tactics, the war might still have be won had it not been for domeopposition. Moreover, the argum runs, inadequate methods and tacwere not simply the result of milit incompetence in waging war aga an elusive enemy. In substan measure, they were the result domestic opposition to the war a to the alleged cruelty of its condi-

So, too, the failure of our political leaders to pursue military advanta is traced to the pressures exerted the antiwar movement at home. We did the Johnson administration to follow up the defeat inflicted in the Vietcong at the time of the offensive in 1968? Why did it refu to commit the additional force necessary to achieve military ve tory? And why, in 1972, were Nix and Kissinger so eager to settle the terms finally offered by Hand terms that did not adequately refle the strength of our position at the time? Kissinger later stated in le memoirs that the United States w negotiating more with itself than will its adversary. To this the revisionis would add that America fought more with itself than with the adversar

The burden of the revisionist a tack on Vietnam orthodoxy, howeve resides in the consequences of d feat. For it is in the view we have taken of defeat in Vietnam, as mud as in the fact of defeat itself, that the revisionists find the major explantion for the subsequent decline d American power and position in the world. This view has bred a pe vasive suspicion of American power and of the purposes it might serve Where the utility of American power was not discredited, its legitimac was. The results of this suspicionwhich found nearly perfect expresion in Carterism—are now apparen for all to see. The nation's globa interests are more vulnerable that at any time since World War II.

The intent of conservative revision ists is evidently not limited to the

terested purpose of setting the rical record straight. However gaded they may be that their on of the causes and conseices of defeat is correct, they are persuaded that if their version ot accepted we will continue to ess the steady erosion of Ameripower and position. The "truth" et forth by revisionists is not ely historical but political-in-I, it is above all political. So long in ne nation's collective memory of nam is determined by the conional view of this war, it will be cult for us to act with the pride assurance we require. In a word, rehabilitation of American forpolicy depends on the rehabilitaof Vietnam.

HAT ARE WE to say of conservative revisionism? Could we have won the war had it not In for domestic dissent? We Me uld not try to evade the question contending—as do not only lad ics but often supporters of the of as well—that we could never uarly define what "winning" meant more grandly, that we never had oherent theory of victory. This is I sense. Everyone seems to be and te clear on what defeat always ant in South Vietnam. Why then ri; victory been such a mystery? nning the war meant from the ltset denving a communist victory South Vietnam, nothing more and thing less. (Whether winning also plied propping up a South Vietmese government for perhaps as ig as a generation is another mat-; affecting the price of victory t not the way we define it.) Critics of the war contended at

Unities of the war contended at e time that the price of prevailing Vietnam would be so exorbitant at it would rob "victory," hower defined, of any meaning, and eir argument has since been reteted in what is the conventional ew of the war. We could have prediled in Vietnam, the familiar arguent goes, only by destroying what e were ostensibly fighting to save. ow, without doubt the costs of ontinuing the war would have been

considerable. But it seems unlikely that they would have been anything near as high as many have insisted. South Vietnam would not have been destroyed by the effort to save it. The Western alliance would not have fallen apart by our pursuit of victory. America would not have become a police state had the war been allowed to continue.

The dire speculations about what

the effects of continuing the war would have been contrast sharply with the sanguine view taken of the consequences of defeat. More often than not, these consequences are either ignored or simply denied in the conventional view. When, rarely, they are acknowledged, their treatment borders on the ludicrous. It is as though nothing serious follows from defeat in war—at least, not for

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Suite 1809, 2 Park Avenue New York, N.Y. 10016 us. The revisionists may exaggerate when they attribute virtually all our difficulties and setbacks in foreign policy in the 1970s to defeat in Vietnam. Even so, it is absurd to deny that defeat has had serious consequences.

These consequences, it is true, might also have followed had we pursued the war through to victory. But whereas we can only speculate about the consequences of victory, the consequences of defeat are fairly certain. The revisionists' estimate of these consequences is more than occasionally overdrawn, but it still remains solidly rooted in the history of the past decade. Defeat in war is serious, and we must recognize this if we are to learn anything from Vietnam.

Does this mean that the war should have been pursued to victory? Not necessarily. There was a substantial price to be paid for winning. It has to be weighed, however, against the price of losing. The revisionist case -that the price of losing in Vietnam was greater than that of winningappears now more plausible than the conventional view. One may still conclude that the war was so repellent, given the methods by which it was waged, that abandoning it was the preferable course. This, however, is a rather different argument from the one that has usually been put

■ HESE considerations do not vindicate the revisionist case. At the same time, that case cannot be dealt with seriously so long as its merits are not acknowledged. The war could have been won. In large measure, it was lost because of dissent and opposition at home. The consequences of defeat were considerable. Not the least of these consequences was the conversion of our defeat in Vietnam into an anti-interventionist dogma that has been a serious impediment in the fashioning of an effective post-Vietnam foreign policy. Even a modest definition of American interests must imply the risk of intervention. and in circumstances that we may find in many ways undesirable.

This is the case for taking servative revisionism seriously do so is not to condemn those d. opposed the war. Still less is support the purpose ultimatel i forming revisionist efforts. purpose goes well beyond rehalf tating American power in princh The revisionists are intent on reing not only the legitimacy of its vention but also the policy that to Vietnam: global containry There is no compelling reason we should accede to this effort. many good reasons why we ship not.

The strength of the revision case rests largely on a company of the consequences of defeat the price of victory. Revision assume that they know both the sequences and the price. In tr their comparison rests on a ju position of the unknown (the p of victory) and the only partiknown (the consequences of defe Even then, the comparison, un tain as it must be, says nothing all the wisdom of having intervened Vietnam initially. It deals only v the issue of whether victory sho have been sought once we had come so fully committed to the v

Yet the enduring and critical is raised by Vietnam is precisely issue of the policy that led to in vention. The president has recei declared that the nation has covered from a malady called Vietnam Syndrome. One may do that this is so when sending fifty-far military advisers to El Salvador inspired so much public anxiabout the possibility of anot Vietnam—anxiety the Reagan ministration has made special effe to assuage. Apparently the pull has not recovered from a part of Vietnam Syndrome, Its support the administration's defense progra remains, as Secretary Weinberg has noted, fragile. The one sure w to destroy this fragile consensus is undertake, in pursuit of global co tainment, another intervention circumstances where either the three to our vital interests is less thi apparent or the promise of ear success is less than assured.

HARPER'S/NOVEMBER 19

## AN INFLATION LIBRETTO

refrain of paper money in Argentina

by Nikolai Stevenson

N THE realms of the public imagination. Argentina is now as mythical a place as the dreaded lands of Gog and Magog, whose zens were more symbolic than . A country of twenty-eight mil-, with a land mass that is the th largest on the planet, it has ome, instead of a nation, a metar that expresses all that is wrong the decadent West: anti-Semn: resurgent fascism: militarism: disregard for human rights. v a few months ago El Salvador the place where ghouls trod; Argentina is the land of demons. Auch of the recognition of the ntry as a heaven for generals in kboots does indeed have to do h the military regime, a governnt with little on its agenda but i-preservation. But the view of Aritina as a cave of hydra-headed nsters also has origins in a xenobia peculiar to American jourism and letters. Bad enough that nation independent of Spanish cogialism since 1816 should become kind of lab culture for extremist ology on both the right and left: t worse is the response in the nerican press, which, rather than ring to explain the origins of this bacle and learn what is happeng in the country, has dissolved into cacophony of bickering, almost, it ems, in an attempt to hide its igrance of what life in Argentina is ally like. Easier, always, to search r analogies than to visit a country · speak its language.

Witness the pitched battle that as fought in the press over the

Argentine journalist Jacobo Timerman. Mr. Timerman, a brave, lucky, and obstinate man, was held prisoner for two years by the Argentine military government. He was tortured and interrogated extensively about being a Jew. Finally, in 1979, he was permitted to emigrate to Israel, where he wrote a book about his experience. It was published earlier this year, at first to favorable reviews. Anthony Lewis, in The New York Times Book Review, described the "final solution" that is descending on Argentina. In the New Republic, Alfred Kazin dwelt on Mr. Timerman's comparisons of Argentina and Nazi Germany, Elsewhere, in Newsweek, Time, the Nation, and other periodicals, the reception was sympathetic to Mr. Timerman and most compared his courage favorably with that of Solzhenitsvn.

UT THE PRESS, like some medieval church, is prone to inquisitions, and it wasn't long before Mr. Timerman was delivered for inquest. In the Wall Street Journal, Irving Kristol, one of the editors of the Public Interest, referred to his reputation for "inflated self-centeredness," and in a syndicated column William Buckley, Jr., wondered about his stability. The theme of this counterattack, even against a man whom all agreed had suffered horribly at the hands of tvrants, was that he symbolized the

Nikolai Stevenson, an international consul tant, has traveled extensively in South America and Europe.

ugly head of the human rights policy, which the conservatives hoped was lying slain somewhere in a cave in Plains, Georgia, Better to attack Mr. Timerman, and lay to rest once and for all the idea of letting questions of conscience decide foreign policy, than to let one man's account of brutality reverse last November's

mandate for Realpolitik.

The press has always done a brisk trade in symbols, and Argentina, with its lodes of generals, torturers, and anti-Semites, is too rich a market not to be exploited. Fair enough, and even a bit overdue, since many of the problems in the country go back to the era of Perón, who first came to power in the Forties, But what struck me about all the acrimonious words written about Argentina was the almost complete absence of any firsthand reporting or attempts to understand the reasons for the turmoil. Who didn't have an opinion about the collapse of the nationbut who had been there recently? Certainly not Anthony Lewis, nor Buckley, nor Kristol, nor anyone else, it seemed. Yes, the larger papers had excellent reporters in Argentina-for the Times it was Edward Schumacher: for the Washington Post Cynthia Gorney wrote a series of fine articles-but their conclusions mattered not in the ideological pitched battles. Timerman and Argentina had become abstractions, and the experiences of both mattered less for what they were-manifestations of a degenerate political and economic situation-than as articles of faith in the debate on either the communist threat or the nature of tyranny. Thus the reasons for the nation's decline went uninvestigated.

BOUT the time Timerman was bearing witness in his book, and then in the press. to the horrors of the regime. I was in Argentina, Not surprisingly, the reality bore little resemblance to the portrait in symbolism. To begin with, it did not resemble Nazi Germany in the 1930s, which I had also seen. There were no generals making arm-waying speeches from balconies: no mass rallies like those in Nuremberg: nor did I meet any of the determined ideologues I remember so vividly in Germany before the war. And despite what I knew from accounts of the nation's degenerate political condition, it did not resemble a backdrop for State of Siege.

Instead, I found most I spoke with giddy in their fascination with monev. The talk, if anything, was about the possibility of further devaluation of the peso.\* There was a sense of being on a foundering ship while watching the crew below decks playing blackjack. The speculation I heard was financial rather than political. Thus, if one is searching for analogies to the collapse of civilian authority in Argentina, it is to the Weimar Republic, which paved the way for the kind of general totalitarianism that Timerman describes in particular, that one should turn.

Were Argentina the melodrama that the press would like to believe it is, inflation would be the soliloguy of despair at the beginning of the second act. Money declines in purchasing power at a rate of about 90 percent a year, although this figure is not a constant. Some months it is up; others it is down. Argentines tend to watch the money markets and the rate of inflation the way New Yorkers follow the price of real estate. Many, I sensed, do little more in their business days than check the value of the peso against the dollar,

ITH WEALTH beyond calculation-the interior of the country has the productive capacity of our Great Plains-and near selfsufficiency in petroleum, how could such a country become a victim of seemingly intractable inflation? The reasons are not as complex as one might think. Essentially the problem is one of expectations. Inflation began under the regime of Juan Perón, who seized power in 1944. He drew his political support from those whom he described as "the shirtless ones." They were the urban proletariat, and to reward them for keeping him in power. Perón obtained for them ever higher wages.

To finance these increases, Perón imposed stiffer taxes. At great expense, he nationalized the telephone and telegraph network as well as the utilities. And, in what is the refrain to all inflation libretti, he printed and printed paper money. Thus the average Argentinian grew accustomed to a standard of living that could not be sustained by the nation's economy. Likewise, for the nation, as trade declined after the surplus boom during World War II, the balance of payments slipped into deficit.

Swept into this economic air pock-

et. Perón decreed that the n should become self-sufficient i primary necessities: automol household appliances, farm ma ery, and so forth. In a grandiose ture, he depleted the national reserves by using them to pay British for the railway system had constructed. Local manufa ers were subsidized, even when g ly inefficient, by imposing high iffs on imported goods, which rai up to 400 percent of the actual ue, not unlike the Underwood Smoot-Hawley duties in the Ur States that preceded, and locked the Great Depression. As a re-Argentine commerce stagnated, reaucratic rolls swelled, and the p lem of unemployment was solved finding make-work for the num less farm workers who poured Buenos Aires. In order to sur politically. Perón favored the facworker over the farmer, though was the latter who produced country's huge indigenous wealt

By 1955, even Perón could withstand the kind of inflatior current that eventually sweeps a all Potemkin-like governments. generals who replaced him, howe had no better answers for a rui economy than did their failed decessor. The seeds of inflation expectation and the determination the part of almost everyone to ma tain the generally high standard living made it impossible to find solution to economic problems t resulted from political expedier Civilian government after gove ment was formed, but none mana; to survive a full term. Each aborted by the military when it came obvious that the politici were not doing a proper job. But military regimes could do no beti

In the Sixties and early Seventias the pendulum of power swiftom the civilian to the military at then back again, the political cencontinued to evaporate. By the 19 it seemed that all that was left a Argentina were the shrill voices the extremists. A civil war of the foundation of the streets of Buenos Ai and elsewhere between the so-call urban guerrillas and the military while governments, including controlled.

or the value of the dollar against the Japanese ven. True, the rate of inflation has dropped, from around 500 percent a year in 1976, but this has done nothing to relieve feverish speculation, reminiscent of that which once surrounded Dutch tulips. The owner of a little café where I ate my breakfast each morning liked to brag that he could sell his luncheonette for a million American dollars. There were many such stories, but the effect was that no one thought of monev except in terms of magic, and it is this debasement of the currency that has subtracted from productive endeavors, ruined one civilian government after another, and provided. in my opinion, the reason for the dissolution of the moderate position in Argentine politics. Like France during the revolution, when its currency became worthless, Argentina is now prev to extremists on all sides.

<sup>\*</sup>Since February, the peso has been devalued four times; currently the exchange rate is close to 7,000 pesos to the dollar. In 1975 it stood at nine and a half to the dollar.

I by a rehabilitated Juan Penarched on and off the stage instables in a Gilbert and Sulchorus. And the operetta is widow, Isabel, went through otions of governance until she, was overthrown and Jorge Vithe army chief of staff, formed mother government. Indeed, this entire period the only unt was the further debasement currency.

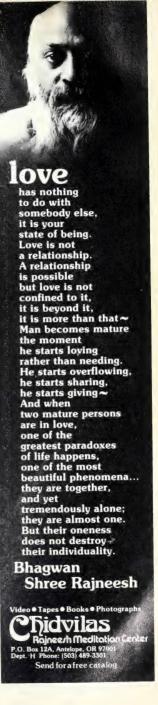
is frequently suggested that emocracies such as the United tates are powerless to deal efectively with inflation because politicians cannot take the unar measures needed to curb the action of paper currency. The ted corollary is that a tough iry regime can make the pros stick; stern medicine, but efe. Unfortunately, the truth lies here. Witness the successive iry regimes of General Videla now Roberto Viola. Although nilitary can maintain its power rute force, it cannot be as autarian, ironically, when it comes recting economic policy.

e restraints in Argentina are old: first, inflation is so instinalized that the average worker a monthly wage increase ind to the cost of living. Few, if want to give this up, because istains an illusion of affluence. o, in the United States, really s deflation, or prices to drop, pt maybe a few banks?) Secand less obvious, the president nable to use any of his powers ontrol inflation. Part of the probis that his authority is controlled he other members of the junta. oath of office requires him to up command of his troops. But if he were allowed to keep n, it is doubtful that they would used as, say, General Pinochet used his powers to lower inflain Chile. Hence, when displaced kers show up at the Argentine nk House" to protest the lack of s, the president has to either reate the demonstrators or to find n work elsewhere. He does this

because unemployment insurance does not exist, and the protesters can cause trouble for the regime. Even so, there are now one million unemployed.

The result is that, far from using draconian methods to force down inflation, which worked in Chile, the government in Argentina temporizes, putting itself in the same trap as that in developed Western democracies. And although the country has recently made the usual half-hearted attempts to curb inflation-through encouraging free trade, allowing inefficient businesses to go brokeit has had no more success, relatively speaking, than has the United States in preventing the erosion of its currency. The Argentine generals' compromises on free trade resemble President Reagan's acceptance of restrictions on Japanese imported cars. In effect, then, Argentina has all the problems of a democracy with none of the advantages. Indeed, the senseless brutality of the generals may well be a function of their inability to handle the difficult economic questions.

HAVE little doubt that when the captors of Mr. Timerman tortured him they chanted "Jew! Jew! Jew!" as he has described, and that throughout his imprisonment they remained fixed on the question of whether or not he was a Zionist. But lost in all the discussions in the United States about whether Nazism has taken root in Argentina is the collapse of moderate voices in the affairs of state. Whether it can be attributed to inflation or not-I suspect that much of it can-there are no strong political parties. The military, as is well known, is in power, but if circumstances were otherwise it could just as easily be the extreme left. The point is that no centrist position can form or sustain a governing coalition. Furthermore, Parliament has been indefinitely suspended. Thus few, including the officers of the junta, have had any practical opportunity to master the art of civil administration. It is as if in the United States the Joint Chiefs of Staff were



endeavoring to perform the duties of the executive branch.

Few people I spoke with accused the junta of financial corruption. Several called the generals "politicians in uniform," and one man. rather defensively, asked me to explain the presence of General Haig in our cabinet. Nevertheless, without any kind of democratic tradition or mandate from the electorate, the military regime has developed a siege mentality. Somebody is out to get them; the left, the Chileans, the Russians, or the Americans, Last year Argentina spent \$8 billion on arms,\* which is over \$2 billion in excess of its foreign currency reserves.

Not even a border skirmish with Chile last spring can justify such expenditure, but the fear expressed by the generals' leadership is symptomatic of a political spectrum without a center. And Mr. Timerman was certainly not the only person abducted. While I was in Buenos Aires, the following item appeared in the Herald, the English-language newspaper. The title read: ABBUCTED MEN RE-

LEASED:

Both men, Hector Piñon and Jorge Mabrino, were released on Saturday night, it was learned yesterday, and both were reported to have been tortured with an electric cattle prod while held. Mabrino was taken from his home in Hurlington at 1:30 a.m. last Wednesday and Piñon from his home at Jaidel at 11:30 p.m. the same day. Plainclothesmen with police support acted in both abductions, according to the report of the arrest given by Piñon's father last week, Mabrino was believed to have been hospitalized because of his condition after his release.

It is said, although no one can know for sure, that there are between 6,000 and 15,000 missing persons. Most of these disappearances date from the chaotic civil war of the Seventies, but their legacy is another hindrance to any kind of return to permanent civilian authority. The military refuses to admit to any guilt

in this matter, as do extremist groups on the left, but if the loss of these people is not somehow acknowledged. the factionalism will remain and the terror will feed on itself. It is a sad paradox that sums up the Argentine tragedy: if the missing persons are made a political issue, and the officers responsible put on trial, the controversy may divide the nation vet again; and if they are ignored, as the military would like, a dreadful fact of Argentine political life is swept away as though it had never happened and as though those responsible are nowhere to be found. Either way, the rule of law will suffer

■OWARD the end of my stay in South America, I made the crossing by steamer from Uruguay to Buenos Aires. We came up the River Plate, so broad that its banks are invisible from the far shore, and arrived at the port just after dawn. Standing on the foredeck, looking out at the miles of wharves, cranes, and warehouses, I came to the conclusion that Argentina, despite some vast differences, is a lot more like the United States than many in the current debate over Timerman would like to admit

Argentina is not a world apart; it is a nation very much like our own. Both the United States and Argentina are immensely rich—so rich, in fact, that they have rarely taken pains to ensure that the best governments flourish. It would be easy to dismiss the corruption, waste, and administrative ambiguities that have characterized Argentina as the aberrations of a fascist nation, except that the same shortcomings have often characterized U.S. history.

Both nations exterminated their indigenous Indians early on as they pursued their "manifest destinies." General Roca, like his military colleague and contemporary Phil Sheridan, believed that the only good Indian was a dead Indian, though Roca often had a priest on hand to baptize the victims before the slaughter.

Both the United States and Argentina have an arrogant disregard for cost, because they have always

been able to rely on what they ceive to be limitless resources, now, both nations have probable an increasingly useless prourrency. Money means little in ther country anymore.

The point missed in the many umn inches devoted to consign Argentina to the dustbin of ty nations is that on a small scal has been, like the United States. tune's child. It has never stoppe consider the nature of its vast we how to conserve it, how to build the future. It has an essential ha tiness, benign at times, but none less always present, buttressed by ability to fuel and feed itself. never the need to go hat in han others. Thus, when it rages, like spendthrift child it does so inwar against its own citizens, rather t against the rest of the world.

The conspicuous consumption as political as it is economic. as all Argentine governments. itary or civilian, have resorted to printing press and other gimmick. maintain the illusion of productive so have the citizens used up their litical capital by allowing others. the junta, to do the job of gov ing that they themselves should doing. In Argentina this is manif ed in a willingness to let the n tary step in whenever things get of hand; in the United States, i shown in the faith that the fede government will always be around underwrite a failed corporation provide social security. But it is to be in downtown Buenos Aires see the magnificent House of F liament, which stands on one of city's main squares. It is desert except for one wing, which hou the national library. No represent tives are inside debating the issufor none is elected. Argentina's preent turmoil is as much a result inflation as it is of a weak politic system and generals with a content for democracy. And the press in United States, rather than search for metaphors that reduce a nation to a cliché, would do well to exam the concurrent rise of inflation and the deterioration of civil administr tion.

<sup>\*</sup> Its external debt totals \$27 billion, while borrowing continues, despite the fact that interest alone costs some \$5 billion a year.

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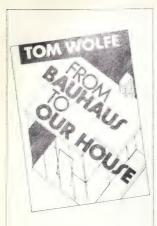
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Solution to the October Puzzle Notes for "Diametricode"

Across: 7. quad-renni (reversal)-ally; 11. pi(m.)p; 12. O-a-k; 13. firm, two meanings; 14. dicier, anagram; 15. unmesh, anagram of (B) ushmen; 16. (li) quids; 18. legal, anagram of alleq (ation); 19. an-(o) ne-X; 20. ignobleness, anagram; 21. taxi-NG; 25. cliché, anagram; 29. de-cay; 32. (Tar) zan-i.e. (De) r(ek); 33. sal(M) on; 34. Ella, hidden in reverse; 35. a-ft.; 36. boss, two meanings; 37. worsen, hidden; 38. ren-ews; 29. worn-out, anagram; 40. fili (buster-l) ng. Down: 1. ju (ju)-piter (anagram) = 2. adm(l) ra (anagram) = 1; 3. rear-MS; 4. (J) un(e)-just; 5. var-mint; 6. b (lush) ed; 8. orb (reversal) -S; 9. labial, a-b-l in anagram of all; 10. lief, homonym; 16. C-land; 17. da (L-L) y; 22. anatomic, anagram; 23. Z (ill) ion; 24. geranium, anagram; 25. cast-rat-l; 26. B-luster; 27. hood-wink; 28. K-in-ship; 30. be (yon) d; 31. lla-(reversal) -Nero.

### PUZZLE

#### MASTERPIECE

by E. R. Galli and Richard Maltby, Jr.

#### This month's instructions:

There are twelve unclued entries in the diagram, Each of the six horizontal ones bears the same relationship to one of the vertical ones

Clue answers include three proper nouns. As always, mental repunctuation of a clue is the key to its solution.

The answer to last month's puzzle appears on page 95.

#### CLUES

#### ACROSS

- 1. Getting kind of cross, give back a set of tools-the ones with teeth (8)
- 5. Make a connection for a reefer-almost (4)
- 8. Money notice (4)
- 10. It starts in Pittsburgh and heads off onto highway into Ontario (4)
- 11. In a simple, uninflected form, decorate bustle (2-2)
- 12. Expresses a belief-that would be foolishness in Democratic South (6)
- 15. Cross one grade (5)
- 16. He stalls Ivy League school in radical moves to the west (7)
- 17. One making provisions for rebuilding terrace (7)
- 19. Unit of heat used by weathermen (5)
- 21. A name for the Lord—it's dropped from Loyola's society (4)
- 23. Check dog beginning to bark (4)
- 24. Pay is right, with slight adjustments to enumerate (10)
- 25. Row in the Malay Sound (5)
- 26. Bishop bubbles absolute nonsense (7)
- 27. Races the engine in reverse, giving comfort (4)

#### DOWN

- 1. Disbelievers (sic), hedging, observed Sabbath (8)
- 2. Standee at Dancin' appears earlier (9)
- 3. One has to get into practice for invective (6)



- 4. Tart, to be benevolent, accepts \$100 (4)
- 6. Make an engraving pronounced in size (6)
- 7. Wise about the filling in Chinese soup (4)
- 8. Dot is exciting to me (4)
- 9. Western entertainment raises stink around the east (5)
- 13. Big Ten school that's said to be hidden (5)
- 14. They make mail arrive quickly without additional stam at first (8)
- 18. Our ancestors quietly settled in Nemea after uprising
- 19. Intimidation from the Mad Hatter (6)
- 20. Way in which the conventiongoer's showing at the end (4
- 21. Preserves agreement for German manuscript (4)
- 22. Sign that goes up in the upper-right-hand corner! (4)

23. Small animal sits on one in the country (4)

#### CONTEST RULES

Send completed diagram with name and address to Masterpiece, Harper's Magazine, Two Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Entries must be received by November 8. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened will receive a one-year subscription

to Harper's. The solution will be printed in the December issue. Winners' names will be printed in the January issue. Winners of the September puzzle, "Sixes and Sevens," are Daniel Asimov. Stanford, California; Mary L. Haas, Erie, Pennsylvania; and Diana Santamaria, Mexico City, Mexico.

December 1981

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# LUIGI BARZINI THE AMERICANS



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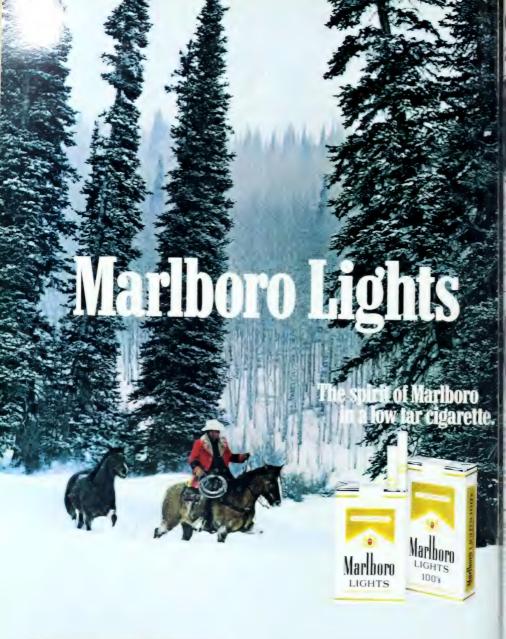
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America was the first country to massproduce gasoline automobiles for general use, the first to build a car that traveled more than two miles a minute, the first to offer fully automatic transmissions, and the first to employ standardized parts.

It pioneered bumpers, electric starters and horns, force-fed lubrication, power steering, four-wheel hydraulic brakes, back-up lamps, gasoline gauges, cranktype and electric windows, all-steel bodies, paints in a wide range of high-gloss colors, safety glass, air cleaners, air conditioners, gasoline and oil filters, easily changeable tires, independent front-wheel suspension, seatbelts, energy absorbing frames, even computers to control engine and vehicle functions.

When somebody says American automakers haven't been innovative, ask him who developed the Jeep, the station wagon, the first manned vehicle to traverse the moon, the 12-month warranty? Who really made the first automobile affordable and reliable?

The U.S. automotive industry, that's who

It accounts for one-fifth of the country's gross national product and one-sixth of its employment. It transforms more than 20% of this nation's steel output,

60% of its synthetic rubber, 50% of its malleable iron, and 25% of its glass into the cars and trucks that America wants and needs. And it will have invested more than \$70 billion by 1985 to give us automobiles that deliver unsurpassed performance, efficiency, and reliability. That ranks as the largest privately funded investment program in history, dwarfing the Alaskan pipeline and even the government's Apollo program.

America's top two corporate spenders on research and development last year were both automotive companies. Their combined R&D outlays approached \$4

billion

The industry is waging an uphill battle against the rayaging effects of a slow economy, high interest rates, a tangle of government regulations, foreign competition, high labor costs, and prices spouting at the pump. Rather than retreat, it's

determined to march on.

The X-body was followed this year by the K and the J, the Escort and the Lynx. A phalanx of technological innovations included electronically controlled engines; new applications for plastics, aluminum, high-strength steel, and magnesium; new automotive primers and paints; and new aerodynamic designs.

All this translates into more performance for the buck, more miles per gallon. and more quality and reliability for con-

sumers.

So next time somebody tells you about his foreign make, tell him to get a horse.

Or a pony if he prefers the economy model



# Harper's

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### LETTERS

#### While the rich recover

Walter Karp's attack on the Reagan administration ["Coolidge Redux," Harper's, October] at first aroused a feeling of depression, which quickly turned positive. After the superficiality of his reasoning became apparent, I felt justified in my support of the present administration.

Perhaps typical of this superficiality was his statement regarding the "extravagantly worthless nuclear breeder-reactor." Completely ignored is the fact that this particular nuclear system is right now the only hope for long-term energy independence. This is the only system that can accomplish this goal without the risk of creating potentially catastrophic global weather changes that could result from the greenhouse effect caused by burning fossil fuels.

Mr. Karp totally ignores the road our country has taken to arrive at its present condition. The load on the productive sector was approaching the point where the incentive to produce was slipping badly. Yet all he can propose, by castigating present efforts, is more of the same, only faster.

> ROBERT E. BOYAR La Grange, Ill.

Congratulations to Walter Karp for his article "Coolidge Redux." His analysis makes it clear that the so-called new conservatives operating through Reagan & Co. are not

conservatives at all, but rather th most extreme of authoritarian re olutionaries. Like their rivals in the Kremlin, with whom they have s much in common, the Reaganites as out to impose on their own natio and, if possible, on the earth as whole) a kind of monolithic mil tary-industrial state in which social diversity, traditional human value such as equality and democracy, and the surviving remnants of the nat ural world are all sacrificed to th demands of industrialism, central ized power, and technology. (The three go nicely together.)

In this respect, the differences be tween the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. are those of evangelical dinosaurs competing for dominance on one small planet: the first deifies Jesus Christ, the other Karl Marx. Neither has much practical interest in what those two sincere and hard-working fellows actually preached.

Edward Abbey Oracle, Ariz.

Excellent! Excellent! Excellent! Walter Karp's penetrating analysis of Reagan's "Program for Economic Recovery" left me spellbound. His article exposed the intent of Reagan's program so clearly for what it is—the unchaining of capitalism and the repression of the poor—that I felt a tremor of terror at the jeopardy in which our nation now finds itself.

On some subliminal level I had begun to feel that Reaganomics and all it stood for were remiss in

resenting the participatory deracy we believe in. But, like most zens in this country, I stood quietin the dark waiting for Reagan indrape this magnificent new stat--National Renewal. And there in dark, listening to the preparatory nting and groaning, I strained see what it would look like. But s, without clear lighting and dition it was impossible. Thanks to ther Karp's son et lumière, the ctacle of National Renewal lies used and highlighted for all to

> NEAL MIZE Lexington, Ky.

Walter Karp's hysterical diatribe ws just how out of touch he is the average citizen. The people o voted Reagan into office were I up with a government of waste, reasing regulation, and constant bt. and with a philosophy that we add spend ourselves into whatever the of bliss our little hearts desired. We voters wanted something differ-

We are in such a mess that no sinadministration can bring us out,
at we can make a start. No single
oup agrees on what is the right
ace to cut spending. I for one
suld have started with the waste in
e military. The one truth is that the
deral spending level is and will be
r some time out of control. With
many people getting a monthly
teck from the federal government
e have only begun to hear the loud
implaints. The cuts are still necssary. One of our biggest expenses
solay is just servicing the national
elit

Mr. Karp seems to think that a apitalist is the lowest of all human rms. His thoughts along this line take one wonder if he got his ideas from Marx or Engels or someone lee. A person running his own busiess can succeed only if he makes good product or provides a good ervice. If that makes him a capitalist, then I think the consumer is still etter off—primarily because he can my or not buy based on the value of the product or service.

ROBERT E. MEGILL Houston, Tex. WALTER KARP REPLIES:

I hope I do not depress Mr. Boyar again by pointing out that even the most ardent supporters of nuclear energy have long regarded the breeder-reactor as an unmitigated technological folly. As for "the load on the productive sector," will Mr. Boyar please explain why aid to crippled adults and impoverished children constitutes an insupportable "load" on the richest economy in the world, when it was not beyond the capacity of the rural economy of Tudor England?

Does Mr. Boyar believe that bread riots would be an "incentive to produce" anything but billy clubs and political repression (which, in truth, the Reaganites seem to be itching to supply!? A president who calls Fourth Amendment safeguards "absurd" is no friend to liberty in America, as Mr. Abbey rightly sees.

Mr. Megill would prefer to cut military spending. On the other hand, the president he defends is trying to increase military spending by the largest amount in our peacetime history. Mr. Megill admires—as do I—the "person running his own business" in a competitive economy. On the other hand, the president he defends opposes all public efforts to maintain competition and protect small business. Mr. Megill seems to be infuriated by the fact that I have pointed out what he finds wrong with the Reagan program.

#### The \$64,000 question

I was aghast at the prim snobbery masquerading as womanhood at Smith. as presented in Barbara Grizzuti Harrison's "What Do Women Want?" [Harper's, October]. But worse still. at least some women there measure their fulfillment as women by their distance from men.

Such animosity has been condemned as misogyny in men. No one has thought it apt to apply the same rigorous logic to these women. The issue here is fulfillment, but before that can be addressed, one must know what is being fulfilled.

This 125-acre monument to a frenzy of intellectual narcissism and

pointless rumination remains a finishing school, first and foremost. Whether that is the intent of the founder, or even of the present administration, is highly irrelevant, it seems, since the cloistered and even closeted life proceeds as usual.

Women studying themselves studying themselves make the case for coeducation. Some at Smith, no doubt,

would disagree.

BARRY NEWCOMB Augusta, Ga.

I want to commend Barbara Grizzuti Harrison on her dispassionate presentation of the views and expectations of some of the most privileged young women in North America. Such talent for tolerating innocuous talk should not go unheralded.

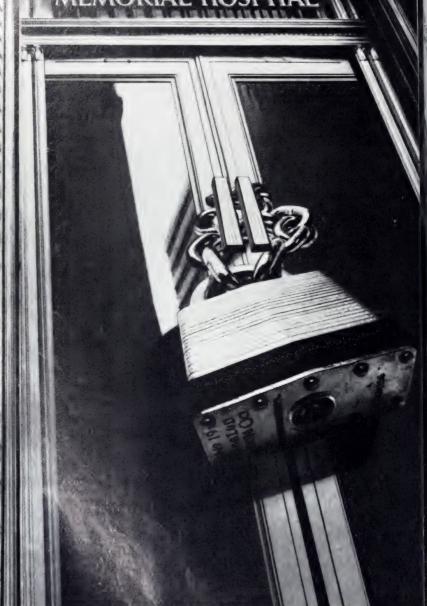
In answer to the question, "What do women want?" Smith women obviously want it all—husband, babies, and career. As Harrison rightly observes, the life that the Smith women of the Eighties so vehemently and noisily lay claim to was achieved by Anne Morrow Lindbergh two generations earlier, and without indulging in any of the rancor and twaddle of present-day Smith women.

In short, who can sympathize with the dire oppression under which these women are so convinced they labor? Who can sympathize with Harper's for printing such nonsense?

PHYLLIS BALDWIN Edmonton, Alberta

I would like to amplify Barbara Grizzuti Harrison's article on feminism at a women's college with the following reflection.

One important consequence of the flood of women into formerly male professions is the cheapening or devaluing of these professions in the public consciousness. If thousands of women can function as lawyers and corporate managers, there's obviously no great glory in a man doing these same jobs. The prestige will be gone. This happened long ago in schoolteaching when women took over; in novel writing and horse riding; and it has happened to the Russian medical profession. Once the mystique of masculinity has disappeared from any occupation, it MEMORIAL HOSPITAL





Some hospitals are facing serious problems these days. Problems like extinction.

The federal government pays only part of the hospital costs incurred by Medicare/Medicaid patients. Hospitals are forced to pass the remaining costs on to private patients.

This practice is called cost shifting. It's unfair. Private patients should not be billed for hospital costs the government doesn't pay.

A study of federal government data reveals the severity of cost shifting. The difference between hospital charges and Medicare/Medicaid payments has more than doubled in ten years. This same study shows that underpayments by Medicare/Medicaid that were shifted to private patients amounted to nearly \$3 billion in 1979 alone. On an average daily basis, Medicare/Medicaid payments were \$198, while private patients were charged an estimated \$239 for the same service. The gap could widen if the government cuts back on budgets allocated to these programs.

In areas that have many publicly supported patients, the repercussions of cost shifting become more severe. Hospitals that have fewer private patients are forced to absorb those costs themselves. This can lead to bankruptcy and forced closings, which in turn denies proper health care to people in these areas. This isn't speculation. In a number of states, hospitals with a high percentage of Medicare and Medicaid patients are in severe financial distress.

Everyone wants to cut health care costs. But shifting these costs doesn't save a cent. It just puts the responsibility for payment on somebody else's shoulders.

Insurance companies are working hard to contain costs with such coverages as second opinions for surgery, outpatient surgery, and hospital preadmission testing.

# TWO WORDS COULD CLOSE THIS HOSPITAL: COST SHIFTING.

But these measures won't solve the problem of cost shifting. The best solution ultimately is equality of payment among all payers. This is not a theory, it's a reality now in two states.

In Maryland and New Jersey an arrangement exists under which Medicare and Medicaid pay the same charges for the same hospital services as everyone else. If *all* states had this arrangement, the

result everywhere would be equal payment for private and government patients.

We hope that, someday soon, hospitals won't have to worry about keeping themselves alive. That way, they can concentrate on keeping people alive. HEALTH INSURANCE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA.

1850 K Street NW, Washington, DC 20006

Let's Keep Health Care Healthy

will be seen to be a routine job, like any other routine job not requiring particularly male capabilities; the only differences will be in monetary reward.

The loss of prestige actually affects both men and women. Since men set the standards of achievement any woman who is seen to compete successfully in a male-dominated profession enjoys enormous status over other women. Come the day, however, when she can look around among her colleagues and see that 50 percent or more are women there will be the devastating realization that her job is "ordinary." I would apply this principle even to government, A Congress half full of women would not be a particularly exciting place for either a man or a woman to aspire to.

I think the loss of prestige in traditionally male pursuits, consequent on their sexual neuterization, will pose an increasingly serious problem for men. The areas of life in which a man may hope to distinguish himself as a man are dwindling. Geniuses and superathletes, of course, will never have this problem; but they are a tiny proportion of the male population, and so their case is irrelevant to the general psychological well-being of men. It is sad that only a breakdown of society to a more primitive level, technologically and socially, will enable man to resume his age-old biological role of protector, provider, and major decision-maker.

GERALD McHugh Baton Rouge, La.

Barbara Grizzuti Harrison purports to ask, "What do women want?" Of course, for Harrison to pose this question is a mere formality. She knows what women want, and she lacks only a laboratory in which to confirm her results.

While she voices qualms about using Smith as a natural laboratory, Harrison's doubts are unfortunately not strong enough to deter her. After apologizing, she proceeds to generalize first about Smith women and then about twentieth-century women.

As Harrison portrays them, Smith

tudents are either separatist feminists or women engaged in knitting socks for Harvard lovers. One stunt is quoted as saying that all she really cares about is Jane Austen. The student's actual response, when asked to act as spokeswoman for her sex, was that she was preoccupied with a paper on W. H. Auden.

Harrison would have her readers believe that Smith women, even an entire generation of American women, want to "have it all," that we secretly want to be both feminist separatists and corporate executives. At least that is what she appears to say. Her sixteen-page analysis of the Modern Woman in her Smith incarnation is so erroneous and ill conceived that she has to stoop to retouching her material—misquoting students and using photographic face-lifts to make the Grecourt Gates look more like an Ivory Tower.

In the end, the question, "What do women want?" is really no more provocative than it was when misguided male theorists posed it ad nauseam in the 1950s.

Smith women cannot speak for women of other classes or their own class, for women of the third world or women from their hometowns, not even for their neighbors or sisters. To do so would be gross arrogance.

Ann Downer Smith College Northampton, Mass.

BARBARA GRIZZUTI HARRISON REPLIES:

I think the question of what women want is as important as it ever was, and it's important no matter who raises it. I didn't set out to answer the question for my sex in general, and so Ms. Downer is indeed right in saying that I used Smith as a laboratory. But what I saw and heard in this "laboratory" I reported on fairly and accurately—otherwise what am I doing with five hundred pages of tape-recorded typescript in my apartment?

No one has yet told me that he or she was misquoted. If the portrait that emerges from these quotes is not to Ms. Downer's liking, I can't feel that it's any fault of mine.

I still don't know the answer of what women want. If I had asknow Phyllis Schlafly or Sandra Do'Connor I probably would his gotten very different answers. To task I set myself was to see who Smith women wanted (if one is locating for a microcosm, one has to state somewhere, and every place can be seen as atypical—which is, in fatthe point).

I no more retouched conversation than I retouched photographs.

Text abus

Joel Agee's essay ["Pony or Pe asus," Harper's, September | rais the very serious question of text be tardization by translation. Becau we can't all learn seven or eight la guages, we have to depend on tranlations to some extent to read the best in world literature. Lagree wit Mr. Agee that slovenly and inacci rate translations are inexcusable. A the very least a translation shoul provide accurate denotation of the author's own words. At its best, translation should even be able t provide much of the connotation particular word has.

However, this is not always poss ble. For example, "tricks" hardl provides the full connotation of th title of Molière's play Fourberie, yet it is the best word we have.

Translations of regional dialectore even more difficult. How does translator convey a sense of the different grammar of, say, a Russia nobleman and his serf? Even Perguin Books, which usually supplied good translations, acknowledges this difficulty. I refer to Richard Freeborn's 1967 translation of Turgenev' Sketches from a Hunter's Album In the story "Singers," in an efforto convey the dialect of a peasan of the southern forests, Mr. Freeborn has endowed him with a Scottish accent.

I do not know whether it is bette to do this, and convey a sense of the disparity between the peasant and the nobly spoken hunter, or whether an accurate but inflexionless transla tion would be preferable. Obviously the Scottish dialect has more mean to a British audience than an nerican one. Would an American inslator make the same mistake? we many texts have been lost in a connotation of another language? in the difference between two diects?

This is a far less serious problem an the deliberate (or ignorant) venliness and inaccuracy that Mr. gee cites, but it is far more insidus. None but the ablest scholars ll ever realize that they are geting more—or less—than the author tended.

I suppose the only resolution to e problem is to read the text in e original. If Samuel Beckett can rite in French, it's the least I can to read him in that language.

Jonathan P. Murray New York, N.Y.

The reasons Joel Agee gives for ot visiting original poems "where tey are" are also reasons for not anslating the originals more faithfully: "it's too difficult...laborious...not economical...not popular," nd apparently not necessary for ublication. Add to the list the fact at some translators consider a close anslation a subordination of their wn creativity, and you can see why any of them are tempted to take a uick pony ride to publication.

Those who have discovered that he poem itself is the reward for heir labors will produce a few faith-ul translations, but if there is no lemand for their work, if the transator's style is valued more than the ocems, most published "translations" vill be translators' poems.

ALICE M. OTIS Oneonta, N.Y.

ERRATUM

In Joel Agee's article "Pony or Pegasus," the original publisher of Stanley Burnshaw's The Poem Itself was wrongly given as the World Publishing Company. It was in fact Holt, Rinehart & Winston. The book is still available in paperback from Horizon Press, 156 Fifth Avenue, N.Y.

HARPER'S/DECEMBER 1981

# GIVE THE GIFT OF THE IRISH MIST.



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### **ENVOI**

Answering the mail

by Lewis H. Lapha

BOUT eight months ago a reader of this column wrote to say that I seemed too prea occupied with the wretchedness of the American establishments and that maybe I should consider going on a long sea voyage. I regret to say that I cannot remember my correspondent's name, but I do recall that her notepaper is blue, that she lives in Traverse City, Michigan, and that her handwriting suggested a forceful and independent habit of mind. She had read the column for a number of years, and although she thought well of it (especially when compared with what she called "the Sunday-school piety" that prevails in most of the national press), she figured that I was in danger of becoming obsessed with people who didn't count for much in the larger scheme of things, Following Mark Twain, she believed that the makers of the world after God were those people who invented hybrid strains of wheat or made poems capable of surviving the erosions of the weath-

What was the point, she said, of writing about the sycophants begging crumbs at the table of the Aspen Institute, of the office-seekers washing in and out of the District of Columbia like the kelp rotting on an autumn tide? Leave them to their gazing in a mirror, she said, and book passage to Singapore. Reading her letter, it occurred to me that she could probably drive a team of mules.

I was reminded of her advice when, in August, I resigned the editorship of Harper's. Circumstances have obliged me to edit the magazine through the December issue, and so this month's editorial becomes the Lewis H. Lapham was the editor of Harper's for six years, from 1976 through 1981.

last in a series of seventy written over a period of six years. Certainly I have been given time enough to propagate my own inventory of opinions, and I can think of no more appropriate use for this space than to pay tribute to the readers who have engaged me in a prolonged conversation. Throughout my tenure as editor of Harper's, nothing gave me greater pleasure than the writing of The Easy Chair-not only because the column allowed me to say what I pleased (an opportunity increasingly rare in American journalism) but also because it introduced me to an audience composed of so many extraordinary individuals as to constantly renew my faith in the hope of a republican debate. The magazine has never been able to find space for more than a fraction of the letters it receives: many of the unpublished letters I answered as best I could, usually after a delay of several months and then only with a few sentences; with maybe fifty or sixty people (none of whom I have ever met) I managed to keep up a desultory correspondence, sometimes for as long as four or five years.

It was the quality of their voices that delighted me and taught me, again and again, to appreciate the orneriness, the intelligence, and the poetry of the American spirit. When it has not been ground down into the lowest common denominator (either by the slogans of the media, the dogmas of religion, or the cant made fashionable by the intellectual mercenaries of both the left and the right), the country's genius reveals itself in flashes of rough-hewn and honest eloquence.

The column received as many letters from women as it did from men. The paper was different, the men ordinarily submitting typewritten i marks on stationery embossed will the letterhead of a university or corporation, the women writing mo hurriedly in ink. But the voices ha similar resonances. None of the could be mistaken for prerecorde announcements, and they were r markably free of the academic pr tension that accompanies the drama of self played out in the salons New York and Washington, My co. respondents rooted their observation in their own experience, not in the authority of the season's best-selling economic theory or on the latest mod el of a modern sensibility hawked i the cultural catalogues.

→ HE publishers of magazines backed by their advertisin salesmen and a panoply of demographic studies as ca pricious as the public opinion polls constantly seek to divine the dimen sion and personality of what the call the magazine "market," To thi end they classify the subscribers un der the rubrics of age, location, sex education, income, and annual con sumption of airplane tickets and hard liquor. If all goes well they discove an audience blessed with an average age of eighteen to thirty-four. This is the crowd that supposedly buy: the most expensive toys in the Amer ican department store-cameras, for eign cars, afternoons in Puerto Rico season subscriptions to Lincoln Cen ter, Superbowl tickets, William Sty ron's ornamental prose, the Betamax

The readers of *Harper's* never could be made to fit the commercial specifications. Some of them drink a great deal of white wine; others subsist on cigarettes and dried fruit. Some have attended as many as several to the several tendence of the

universities, four of them in Gerny; others have yet to graduate m high school. On one day in the nmer of 1979 I received letters m one of the richest men in the ited States and from a Mexican-

perican fieldworker in San Anto-. Both men congratulated the gazine on its competence in dealwith the problem of wealth. An givalent disparity of perspective erferes with attempts to establish political bias or a concentration of bscribers who have drawn a winng number in the zip code. The agazine is accustomed to receiving ters from Messrs. George McGovn, Henry Kissinger, Walter Wrisn, and Timothy Leary. The same osscurrent of opinion prevails nong readers less easily translated to national emblems. More often an not, the letters to the editor bear e postmarks of small towns scatred throughout the republic; the rnestness of tone and the carefuless of the writing testify to the seriisness with which the readers ask emselves moral and philosophical uestions that would be dismissed in

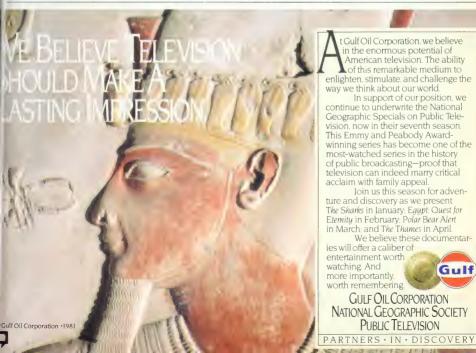
the metropolitan East with a condescending smile. As has been true of the magazine since 1850, most of its subscribers reside west of the Alleghenies.

Over the years of writing The Easy Chair I constantly tried to imagine the readers whom I was addressing, trying to guess who they were, what they looked like, what books they read, whether I would recognize them on a train. It was soon impressed on me that I was corresponding with people bound together not by a set of circumstances (age, dress, occupation, etc.) but because they shared a common attitude of mind. Each of their voices was unique, but they joined together in a motley chorus struggling toward a harmonic unison that was grounded on a belief in the powers of reason and language. Invariably they had made a success of their lives-not usually in the sense of amassing fortunes or minting aspects of themselves into the coin of fame, but in the sense of unearthing their own particular talents. They had raised families, run businesses, conducted experiments, paid taxes,

planted trees, and buried their own dead. They believed in the efficacy of thought and the moral as well as the aesthetic functions of prose; they understood that before anything else could change somebody would have to come forward with an idea that could be expressed in the architecture of words. Words, not pictures; sentences, not graphics; argument, not demagogic assertion. In the written word they recognized the servant of memory and imagination; visual images, appealing to the thoughtlessness of the eye, they tended to distrust as being too fickle and too seductive.

Typically, their letters were like the one from the rancher's wife in Montana who said that she had intended to spend the afternoon canning peaches (an occupation she greatly enjoyed and for which the season was short), but something in that month's column had led her to believe that I had drawn the wrong conclusions about the collapse of the Roman Empire. It was a subject to which she had given considerable thought, and her letter, which ran to

Gulf



almost 3,000 words, was as lucid and perceptive a synopsis of the decline and fall as I have read.

A postcard sent anony musty .. ... Miami commended the reprezine for its "street smarts," a cushty the correspondent found nonceably absent in the theaters of the news. Several vears later, by a coincidence that would have done justice to one of the homosexual bears in a novel by John Irving, I learned that the reader in Miami was a Yugoslav who had served with Tito during World War II. He had emigrated to the United States during the 1960s and had sufficiently well accommodated himself to the precepts of capitalism to make a fortune in the drug trade.

Other readers wrote to report on the condition of democracy in their state or suburb (a condition usually balanced precariously between the critical and the pathological), to suggest further courses of reading to the editors and authors who continued to make a mess of the historical record, to correct errors of punctuation and grammar, to point out that Gen-

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Columbia Pacific University is attracting accomplished individuals, members of the business and professional community desiring to design their own projects, and receive academic acknowledgement for their personal achievements. May I send you our catalon?

R. L. Crews, M.D., President COLUMBIA PACIFIC UNIVERSITY 150 Shoreline, Suite 4312 Mill Valley, CA 94941 USA: 800-227-1617, ext. 480 California only: 800-772-3545, ext. 480 eral Lee's horse, not General Grant's, bore the name of Traveller.

F THE Harper's readership could not be satisfactorily plotted on the salesman's graphs, it presented the magazine's writers with a gift more precious than money or favorable reviews. The readers offered a mixture of acknowledgment and dissent, their criticisms carrying forward a ceaseless debate that defined itself, like the idea of democratic government or the mechanisms of evolution, as a process of discarding as well as acquisition, as a matter of disproof as well as conviction, as a recognition of limits as well as a sense of heightened powers. Whether implicitly or explicitly, the readers assumed the continuum of human experience. I once received a letter from a man in his eighties who said that just the other day he had discovered his mistake in the theory of history that he had been working on for the better part of fifty years. One of his premises had been proved wrong, he said, and he would have to begin again. The prospect didn't prompt him to bitterness, self-pity, or disillusion. Although embarrassed by his stupidity, he looked forward in high excitement to the redrafting of his argument. If he lived another twenty years, he said, he might have learned enough to publish at least the introductory chapter of a book.

In another letter a college sophomore alluded to the "boundless ocean" of his ignorance. The more books he read, the more frogs and newts he dissected, the more he came face to face with the unknowable mystery of the world. He wondered if his feeling of self-doubt would ever give way to the smiling certainty he had noticed in the faces of the newspaper celebrities.

Both the sophomore and the octogenarian (a chemist by profession) conceived of their lives as hazardous voyages. They didn't expect to learn all the answers; given different map coordinates they would see things from different perspectives, but so had the others who had gone before them (and would come after them), and they interpreted the signals

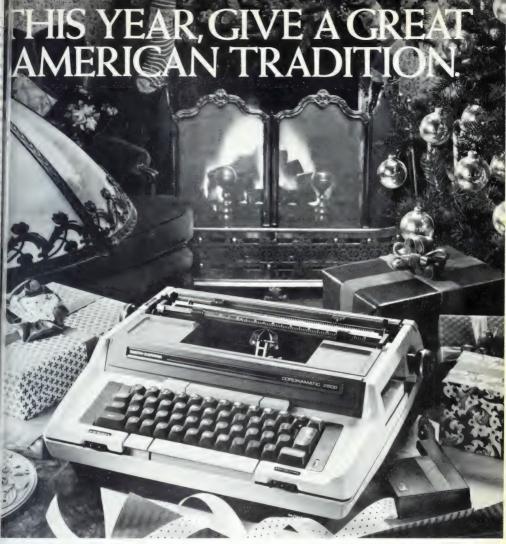
passed between generations as nigational lights flashing across gulf of time. Maybe I clothe the thought in too fanciful a dress failing about which a number readers occasionally complaine but something of their intuition connectedness, of a human unthat cannot be trapped or namwithin the advertising man's nets a snares, lies at the root of the relatible between Harper's and its readers,

As with the lady in Traverse Ci the readers assumed the existence a genuine debate; they didn't exporme to act on their advice or conserbut neither did they expect to recei a printed form saying that their leters had been assigned to a comittee. Time was short, and the had other things to do; a majori of the correspondents said they have before written a letter to a editor.

Many of these readers I expect encounter again. The times chang and so do the media of communication. In 1864, Harper's published reports of the Civil War that appeare in print two or three months after the battles had been won and los As late as 1930, by which time the magazine had begun to pay attertion to the rumors of subversion in physics and clinical psychology, a least half the sciences now routinel taught in school had yet to be discovered.

The next twenty years bid fair to present mankind with both the bright est opportunity and the gravest peri that the human community has had to confront in the five thousand year of its written history. The rewards of success bear comparison with the biblical hope of the millennium; the penalties for failure correspond to the biblical presentiments of catastrophe. We all will need our wits about us; none of us can afford to dismiss lightly any theorem, commentary, or hypothesis arising from the wellsprings of hope, rather than the pit of fear. Among the voices of wisdom and experience, I would expect to recognize many of those to whom I have sent messages in a bottle, and from whom I received an answering note of affirmation.

HARPER'S/DECEMBER 1981



Back in 1903, the L. C. Smith Company introduced its first typecriter. They didn't know it then, but hey started a tradition

Over the years, the name of the Corona' has become a house-hold word. Over the years, people have found out that Smith-Coronas re built to last and last and last

In fact, of all the great portable ypewriters that have been sold over he years, Smith-Corona is the only one that's still doing business at the ame old stand! Now, in 1981, one thing about the Smith-Corona hasn't changed: it's still built to last, to the same exacting quality control standards

But the Smith-Corona of 1981 is a far cry from the first typing machines For one thing, it's electric. For another, it has a unique cartridge system that lets you type on fabric or film, in black or in colors. And you can correct mistakes two different ways, including our brand-new Lift-Rite," that actually lifts mistakes clean off the page!

When you're out holiday shopping, put a great American tradition through its paces—a Coronamatic 2500 or 2200 Type on it Correct a mistake on it. Examine it closely

You'll see why Smith-Corona has been given for years and years to generations and generations. After all, not every typewriter gets to be a tradition

Smith-Corona

# THE FOUR HORSEMEN

Heading for the apocalypse

by Conor Cruise O'Bri

want to help Ireland. The trouble is that the Ireland you want to help doesn't exist, and that your efforts have the effect of making things worse, not better, in the Ireland of reality.

The Ireland of your imagination is an island artificially divided by an act of British policy. Since the British divided it, the British can reunite it. As a united Ireland would (you assume) be a peaceful Ireland, the British government, by its refusal to reunite Ireland, has a prime responsibility for the continuing violence.

ain to move in the direction of Irish unity, you are therefore working, as you believe, for peace in Ireland. You know, of course—and sometimes even show that you know—

In bringing pressure to bear on Brit-

that things are more complicated than what is set out in the paragraph above. Nonetheless, that paragraph contains the essentials of what you believe to be true. Your pressure on Britain to unite Ireland only makes sense in terms of an assumption that Britain can unite Ireland. It is that assumption, however, that is false. Its falsity makes all your well-meant efforts on behalf of Ireland turn into mischief.

RELAND is divided not by a stroke of British policy but by the conflicting wills of its inhabitants.

I must ask for your patience at this point because I am going to talk to you about the Ulster Protestants (a majority of the population of

Northern Ireland) and I fear that a topic that you don't find congeni or particularly worthy of study. the Irish Catholic tradition in whi you were brought up—and in whi I was brought up too—the proteonists are Ireland and England, ten personified and trailing cloud of positive and negative emotion.

Ulster Protestants have no pla in that grand scheme. But sin Ulster Protestants are obviously substantial part of the reality, mig it not seem to follow that there something wrong with the pictur. It might, but, as I know to my co it doesn't. To minds brought up that tradition, and still adhering

Conor Cruise O'Brien has been a member the Irish government and editor of to Observer (London). He continues to write; the Observer and many other publication

To: Governor Hugh Carey, Senator

Edward Kennedy, Senator Daniel

Patrick Moynihan, and Speaker

Thomas P. O'Neill

I know that you all genuinely want to help Ireland. The trouble is that the Ireland you want to help doesn't the Ireland your efforts have exist, and that your efforts worse, the effect of making things worse, not better, in the Ireland of reality.

# HERE'S WHAT'S NOW BEING SAID ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE'S CIGARETTE SMOKE.

Scientist disputes findings of cancer risk to nonsmokers

Smoking Test Fights Past Work

Others' cigaret smoke may not hike cancer risk

Passive-smoking research disputed

2nd-Hand Smoke Risk Discounted

Study Downplays Nonsmoker Risk

Effect of smoking on others doubted

Non-smoker cancer 'risk' questioned

New study contradicts non-smokers' risk

Several months ago, headlines around the world trumpeted alarming news. A Japanese study was claiming that non-smoking wives of smokers had a higher risk of lung cancer because of their husbands' tobacco smoke. That scared a lot of people and understandably so, if this claim was the last word.

But now new headlines have appeared. First, because several apparent errors are reported to have been found in the Japanese study—raising

serious questions about it.

Second, because Lawrence Garfinkel, the statistical director of the American Cancer Society who is opposed to smoking, published a report covering 17 years and nearly 200,000 people in which he indicated that "second-hand" smoke has insignificant effect on lung cancer rates in nonsmokers.

For more information on this important public issue, write Scientific Division, The Tobacco Institute, 1875 I St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

BEFORE YOU BELIEVE HALF THE STORY, GET THE WHOLE STORY. it in maturity, if Ulster Production't fit into that picture, it does to mean there is anything wrong with the picture. It means there is thing wrong with the Ulster word thanks. Isn't that right, gentlemen?

I ask you to bear with me for a little, however, while I talk to you about these people, superfluous and incongruous though you may feel

them to be.

The Ulster Protestants are descended in the main from settlers who came to Ulster from Scotland and England in the first decade of the seventeenth century. Now, in the eyes of many Africans and Asians, and of left-wing Europeans, the mere word "settlers" in itself decides the question. Settlers, by definition, ought either to go back, in the words of the song, "to from whence they came," or to stay on under political and social institutions devised by

But you, as Americans, can't quite take that view, can you? After all, these people's ancestors were established in Ulster before—and I imagine quite a long time before—most of your own ancestors left Ireland to settle in America. Clearly the fact of being descended from settlers does not automatically put people in the wrong. There has to be something else.

the natives.

And, of course, there is. These people are descended not from people who left Ireland to settle in America—obviously a right and proper course of action—but from people who left Britain to settle in Ireland—obviously a wrong one. I don't know that I could prove precisely why the first is so clearly right, and the second so clearly wrong, but in these matters proof is not what counts; what counts is what you feel in your bones.

But then, you see, these Ulster Protestants also have bones, in which they feel quite as strongly as—probably more strongly than—you do, and their bones tell them quite different things from what your bones tell you. Their bones tell them, most insistently, two things:

First, that they mean to stay in Ulster.

Second, that they will not be in-

cluded in any political structure in which Irish Catholics are in a maiority.

The determination of Ulster Protestants to remain in Ulster is comparable to the determination of Israelis to remain in Israel. And the refusal of Ulster Protestants to be incorporated in a Catholic-majority Irish state is as stubborn as the refusal of Israelis to be incorporated in an Arab-majority Palestine. If you spent any time among Ulster Protestants—even among the very moderate middle-class Protestants of the Alliance Party—you would have to realize that it is so.

N ANY CASE, if you follow me so far, you will notice that I am not including loyalty to Britain among the feelings in the bones of this community. Loyalty to Britain is there all right, and important, but it is a qualified, complex, conditional lovalty. It is lovalty to the crown rather than to Parliament. And lovalty to the crown in Ulster is distinguishable from its counterpart in the rest of the United Kingdom, In Ulster, the fact that the crown is a Protestant crown, by the laws of the realm, retains an emotional importance that it has lost in the rest of the United Kingdom, Ulster Protestants remember-and many of them annually commemorate, with a grim enthusiasm disturbing to most people—the fact that their ancestors helped to destroy Britain's last Catholic monarch, and that those who were loval to that particular British monarch, James II, were the Irish Catholics of that time. The marches that commemorate the Battle of the Boyne celebrate the triumph of the Protestant crown.

That itself implies a condition. For if the crown in Parliament—the contemporary constitutional crown—acts in a manner that suggests to Ulster Protestants that they are about to be delivered into the hands of their hereditary Catholic enemies, then the crown, in respect of that transaction, is felt not to be the true crown—the Protestant one, to which Protestants owe and freely accord their loyalty. And, since it is not that

true crown, but something masq, ading in its place, it not merely but must be defied and set at nav

And so, in the great Home In crisis just before the First WAA War, Ulster Protestants did defy liament directly (and the crown Parliament implicitly), set at nau V Asquith's Home Rule Bill, and the ground for the partition of land. And again, in 1974, when Parliament of the United Kingo almost unanimously approved Sunningdale arrangements-inv ing power-sharing between Protants and Catholics in a joint exe tive for Northern Ireland and ical participation of that executive the Dublin government in a Coumof Ireland—the resistance of Uls Protestant workers broke up the arrangements because Protesta saw them as leading in the direction in which they refuse to go: towal a united Ireland.

Irish Catholics are always noved, and sometimes infuriate both by the phenomenon of Uls Protestant conditional loyalty and Britain's responses to it. The pl nomenon itself looks, to Catholi like an odious compound of hype risy and bigotry. Bigotry does con into it but hypocrisy doesn't. Briting leaders seem, to Catholics, to sho criminal weakness in dealing wi the rebellions of the nominally lov (again in Catholic terms). If on Asquith, in 1912—if only Wilson, 1974—had behaved with "firmnes (toward Protestants, that is; toward Catholics "flexibility" is the recor mended posture), why, then we should have peace today, and be well d the road to a united Ireland as wel

That is what you four gentleme expect—or, at any rate, wish—th British to do, is it not?

Well, you may find, though I hop you don't, that part of your wis comes true. In life, as in stories, had ing part of a wish come true can had very horrible thing. Some of you at least, will remember W. W. Jacob's story "The Monkey's Paw," i which a bereaved couple wish for their drowned son to come to them but fail to stipulate that they war him to be alive and whole when homes... I fear your own well-mean

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wishful activity may tend toward a conclusion no less grisly than that of "The Monkey's Paw."

The part of your wish that you are most likely to get is that a future British government—not this one—may declare its objective to be a united Ireland. You may also, though this is somewhat less likely, get another part of your wish: a serious effort on the part of a British government to move in that direction.

The British Labor Party shows clear signs of beginning to abandon that bipartisan policy with the Conservatives that has prevailed over the last nine years. They are moving toward something much more in line with your wish, with a united Ireland as a declared objective. The Social Democratic leaders, though so far cryptic on the matter, are known to be attracted toward such policies. The Liberals, with their Gladstonian inheritance, are also inclined in that direction, provided public opinion is favorable.

And public opinion is favorable. not so much to a united Ireland in itself as to anything that will enable Britain to disengage from Northern Ireland, If a united Ireland will do that, then bully for a united Ireland. This is not surprising. Britain derives no benefit from being in Northern Ireland. That province is a considerable drain on the ailing economy of the entire United Kingdom. British people are tired of having their soldiers and ex-soldiers murdered or maimed, tired of being themselves denounced as oppressors, tired of threats, tired of international pressure. They want to get out if they can.

You have all contributed significantly to this state of affairs. You have made the point that Britain's relations with America are damaged by failure to produce "constructive policies"—meaning green ones—in Northern Ireland. British politicians, and the Foreign Office in particular, are more worried by this than they would be likely to admit. You are all eminent people, key figures in the American political establishment, and what you say has to be taken seriously. You are not creating the

pressure, but you are significantly increasing it.

DUT TOWARD what does that pressure move? Toward a united Ireland? Ostensibly, and initially, yes. But at the point, the predictable part, where it meets determined resistance, the pressure has to swing in another direction.

By now the day may not be far off when the leader of a party committed, in theory at least, to the objective of a united Ireland will become prime minister of the United Kingdom. That in itself might not necessarily mean very much: Sir Harold Wilson, in opposition, favored the idea of a united Ireland-"in fifteen years"-but in office did nothing very effective about it. That might happen again. But it may also happen, as a result of growing British weariness with Northern Ireland. that a prime minister will gain power who is not only nominally committed to unity but is committed to pressing for it, and to attempting to override opposition to it. Such a prime minister, in fact, as all you gentlemen would like to see.

Such a prime minister might be one who genuinely believed in the feasibility of a united Ireland. I could see Dr. David Owen, if he became prime minister in a Social Democrat-Liberal coalition, casting himself with zest in a Gladstonian role. Alternatively, and perhaps more probably, a future prime minister, knowing fully that a united Ireland will not work, might still make a feint in that direction, with the real objective of a simple British disengagement: the dumping of the insoluble Irish question once and for all in the laps of the Irish, and a plague on both their houses.

In any case, if a future prime minister makes such an effort, whether for idealistic or Machiavellian reasons, the immediate consequences are predictable. They would be massive demonstrations of Protestant determination not to move in the desired direction; assertions once more of the conditionality of Protestant loyalty; mass rallies; mass

stoppages—with uglier fringe even—all based not on a minority community, like most of the pressure troubles, but on the majority. Factorial with this reaction, the prime minimal could either subside spluttering. Asquith and Wilson did, or he condecide to press on regardless, as will, I fear, be loudly urged to a by people like yourselves.

But if he does press on, what of he do? The use of force by Britato induce Ulster Protestants to less the United Kingdom and enter united Ireland is out of the questis British public opinion would rejany such policy, which it would rigany such policy, which it would rigany see as widening the area of olence and deepening Britain's volvement in it—the very opposed what British public opinion want to see. And such a policy would as be reougnant to the army.

The only thing such a prime m ister could actually do, having or peaceful means at his disposal overcome the passionate resistance a million people, would be to threa en, and perhaps execute, some kill of withdrawal. In Irish Catholic m thology, this would work. It would be "calling the bluff" of the Ulst Protestants. The trouble is that the is no bluff. The mere threat of, f example, withdrawing the subsidi would certainly not induce Ulst Protestants to turn toward a unite Ireland. The actual cutting off subsidies would indeed have effect but not those intended. In Ulste Protestant eyes, such a policy would represent the penalizing of Prote tants for refusing to submit to Catl olic power.

If they were faced with such a attempt, Ulster Protestants woul not turn toward a united Irelanc they would turn against Britain Their whole history and traditior and patterns of behavior, includin recent patterns (e.g., 1974 and the rise of Paisleyism), imply that. The basic conditions of Protestant loyalt to Britain would have been breached Protestants would turn en mass toward a policy that a minorit among them now advocate: an independent Northern Ireland.

In these conditions, Britain, un der varying forms of attack from h communities,\* and unable to al with either effectively, would be pelled toward withdrawal, not just subsidies but of its entire present in Northern Ireland. The legitacy of Britain's presence in Norther Ireland depends on acceptance a majority of the population re. If that acceptance goes, Brithas to go too. The British publiculd never accept a policy of retining there, working for a united bland, while being attacked from sides. And the army would advise at its role had become impossible.

O THEY would go. And what, gentlemen, do you think would happen then? I know, of course, the optimistic rigmale, long prevalent in Catholic polital circles, about what would happen en. The Protestants, abandoned by e British, would see that their true terests lav in unity with the Reablic and would sit down "round table" with the Dublin governent to work out arrangements for ome kind of federal Ireland. Like ell they would. A purer example of ishful thinking would be hard to nd. The impending and then actual eparture of British administration nd British troops would create a najor crisis: the greatest Ulster has nown since the seventeenth century. crisis of that order does not calm passions, it inflames them. In Northrn Ireland, they are already inlamed. A condition of incipient civil var between Catholics and Protesants exists: the materials for fullcale civil war are piled high in Belfast and elsewhere. British withdrawal would ignite them.

You think that is an alarmist point of view? Have you forgotten August 1969, when British troops were first deployed at the request of Catholics, why they were deployed? They were deployed at the request of Catholics of the protection of the Catholics of Belfast from Protestant reprisals,

following a Catholic insurrection in Derry. They were deployed, in short, in order to inhibit the development of politics—sectarian civil war between the two communities in Northern Ireland. And they have been inhibiting it ever since, with only partial success, but still to a greater extent than could be attained without them.

You probably don't find it easy to believe that, either. The fact that the I.R.A., based in the Catholic areas, is waging "war" against the British Army makes it hard to realize that the British Army, in Protestant-majority areas, is there to protect the Catholics (and in Catholic-majority areas, the Protestants). Nonetheless, that is the reality. If Britain withdraws, each community will look to its own defense: and what each thinks of as defensive activity will look like aggression to the other.

I am not altogether without experience in these matters. I have been, at various times, in the Congo, in Nigeria, on the Bangladesh-Indian border, and in Lebanon, in periods of civil war. I know the smell and the rising dementia of it. And every time I travel in Northern Ireland I get a whiff of that smell, now growing stronger. I have no doubt that British withdrawal would bring on the real thing in full force. You may think that the kind of horrors that happened in those African and Asian countries could not happen in Ireland. If so, you must be forgetting what has already happened in Ireland, inside both communities; the bloodthirsty armed fanatics are already there. If they are let loose on both sides, without any outside restraint, we shall have our Lebanon.

Of course, most people, in both communities, dread civil war and would do anything to avert it, just as in Lebanon. The trouble is that what one community thinks appropriate in order to avert it looks to the other community like an effort to create it. Where radical suspicion and fear exist between two communities, every notable event that occurs serves to feed these emotions, as the recent hunger strikes did, and as they were intended to do by those who organized them.



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<sup>\*</sup> You might perhaps expect that when Britain was engaged in confrontation with the Protestants, I.R.A. violence would stop. At the time of the last major British and Protestant confrontation, however—the Sunningdale period, in 1974— I.R.A. violence actually increased.

F BRITAIN decides to withdraw. the reaction of the Protestant majority in the province will be to take over, as of right, the government of what will be, willy-nilly, a new sovereign state. The authority of the Protestant government will be accepted immediately throughout most of the densely populated areas east of the Bann. But it is not likely to be content with that inner area. It will want its writ to run throughout the province, "Security" will be its paramount concern. It will want to "flush out" the I.R.A.: it will not accept any "no-go" areas; it will reject "kid-glove" methods. These have been well-established shibboleths of Protestant-Unionist discourse for years and they would be the guidelines for the conduct of an independent Protestant government.

So Protestant forces, Protestant-controlled, will enter Catholic areas. These forces will be quite formidable; the R.U.C., minus the British officers, backed by the Ulster Defence Regiment, no longer under British command; the Ulster Defence Association, as a militia containing some sinister components. To Catholics, unlike Protestants, this will not look like "law and order." It will look like armed invasion by their

hereditary enemies.

In short, it will be August 1969 all over again—with the all-important exception that this time there will be no restraint on Protestant force except Catholic force. That is to say, that civil war this time will take its course until it burns itself out.

That course would probably be quite short, but very bloody. It would end in stalemate, following mass migrations of the population: Catholics fleeing from the Protestant heartland, Protestants from the Catholic-majority border areas (which would probably be occupied by troops from the Republic). There would be a new border, approximating to the line of the Bann, separating a smaller, homogeneous Protestant Northern Ireland from the Republic.

This isn't just a private nightmare of my own. Others, including such a persistent unity-pusher as Mr. Jack Lynch, the former Taoiseach, agree that "precipitate" British withdrawal would be likely to have such consequences

When I was a member of the government in Dublin, and of a Cabinet subcommittee on Northern Ireland. Lonce asked an SDLP deputation how many refugees we in the Republic would have to prepare for if things "went wrong" following British withdrawal. This was, I believe, in 1975, after Fianna Fáil (then, as now, in opposition) had come out in favor of a British "commitment" to withdraw (but not of actual withdrawal). The deputation consisted of two Catholic politicians we'll known to all of you: one from east of the Bann, and one from west. They said that if things were "very carefully handled," they might not go wrong. Yes, but if, all the same, they did go wrong, how many refugees? They conferred for a few minutes and came back with an agreed answer-between 55,000 and 65,000 families: that is, about 250,000 people, about half the Catholic population of Northern Ireland.

Not my guess-the guess of people who agree with you. I didn't have the heart to ask them how many dead there might be; in practical terms our government was directly concerned only with the refugees. But a refugee population move of those dimensions probably implies a death roll of tens of thousands (as compared with slightly over two thousand in all the ten years of violence at present levels). And that is just the Catholic score. There would be Protestant refugees too, though they would not come to the Republic, and there would be Protestant dead.

Know that you have some inkling of the level of danger involved and that you are not looking for immediate (or "precipitate") British withdrawal. What you want the British to do is to find an agreed political solution, involving some kind of united Ireland, and then to withdraw. What you refuse to see is that no agreed political solution is available, since the parties are in radical (and increasing) disagreement. The British can't deliver

a united Ireland or "an agreed III land" (the favored formula of vor common guru, Mr. John Hume) al then get out. It would be nice. agree, but they can't. What they co do is just plain get out. The long and the more intensely the presel combination of physical violen and international political pressu is applied to them, the more like they are to do just that. And male no mistake; if they do decide to they will go quickly: "precipitately if you prefer. They are not about say they are going, and then har around to take the consequence and the blame for the consequence as Mr. Lynch and Mr. Haughe would have them do. The gap b tween the moment they decide to g and their actual departure will I very narrow. As in the case of Pa estine

You will, I know, feel sincere outraged at being accused of havir some share in the responsibility for a buildup toward civil war in Ir land. You have, after all, condemne the Provisional I.R.A., and oppose its fund-raising efforts in America You have indeed, and you have ru considerable political, and perhap other, risks in doing so, I respect your courage, and your intentions Unfortunately, in adding your influ ential voices to the chorus that ir sists on the necessity for a unite Ireland, you are nonetheless helpin those you condemn. By designatin their goal as the one that must b attained, you, and many others are helping to validate their cause That helps them a great deal morthan your condemnation of their methods hinders them.

My message to you is that we in Ireland may well be getting quite near the brink of British withdrawal followed by civil war. Americar pressure for unity helps to bring ustill nearer that brink. You are the most influential of the politicians who have been applying that pressure. I ask you to reflect, and desist Negative advice, I agree. But there are times when the only helpful advice is "Stop!" and, if that advice is not heeded, no further advice will be of any use.

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### RETURN TO SENDER

Reclaiming the post office from big business

by William Rodger

N RETROSPECT, the reorganization ten years ago of the post office into a federal corporation. with an independent commission to set rates, and a board of governors, appears to have been a conquest for the telephone company and mail-order marketing. In what even then, in Richard Nixon's time. seemed to be an extraordinary example of giving the weasel the run of the henhouse, the architectural plan for the new postal system was the work of a presidential commission directed by Frederick R. Kappel, a former groundman who became chairman of the board at AT&T. He had directed an earlier, more famous study that resulted in enormously increased federal salaries-on the grounds that wise decisions correlated with high incomes. That thesis alone was enough to have justified sending Mr. Kappel, if not the rest of us, back to climbing telephone poles. There were dissidents who wondered whether a man who had spent his life taking business from the mails to build the phone company was an appropriate choice to prepare the burdened post office to serve the future. Nevertheless, the study's recommendations became law, with few, if any, defenders of the postal system created by Benjamin Franklin getting near enough to Mr. Kappel's commission to help plot the future.

In the ten years since the department was detached from the cabinet as the renamed U.S. Postal Service,

William Rodgers, the author of Think: A Biography of the Watsons and IBM, as well as numerous other books, lives in Centreville, Maryland. the autonomously managed entity has run up a dazzling performance. Rates have been raised six times, with the price of a stamp reaching eighteen cents last spring, and twenty cents on November 1. It took forty-seven years for the cost of a stamp to go from two to three cents on July 6, 1932. After that the cost of mailing a letter wasn't changed again for twenty-six years. Americans could mail a postcard for a penny from 1872 to 1952, a span of eighty years, under a public-service postal policy

offering what was perhaps the fine communications bargain in huma history.

But the concept of a postal syster as a service to the public, dedicate to the promotion of literacy and a informed citizenry as the essential ideal of national policy, was under mined, if not sabotaged, in 197 Whether or not it could be predicte then, its dismal fate is now reaffirme by a succeeding generation of policial enforcers.

The reaffirmed threat to the pos



ice is established in the context the Reagan administration's comndium of Holy Writ, as produced twenty volumes by the Heritage undation, a think tank and pubhing abbey that, like old manuipt illuminators, labored through a dark ages of the Democrats to 
lighten the land for the redeemReagan reign. "Mandate for 
nange," as the Heritage manuripts were called, took quick lethal 
m at the post office:

The long-term future of the Postal Service should be re-examined. In a competitive age in which the telephone, not the post, provides essential communication, it is unclear why there should be a publicly owned and supported national document delivery company.

The chief acolyte for Mr. Reagan, avid Stockman-inferentially acnowledging a triumph of competion for Frederick Kappel and the lephone. company-continued the examination with an appearance efore Congressman William D. ord's House Committee on the Post office and Civil Service. He conrmed a cut of \$500 million from an 860-million package of postage applements provided by the nation sustain the postal system. What vill be left for further examination a two or three years, when a policy f two hundred years is interred alogether, produced no doubt or hesiancy on the part of Mr. Stockman a former divinity student in his lays of draft eligibility), as he caried, like a true believer, the cross of economic faith for his secular naster

But what Stockman and the Manlate for Change inspectors at the Heritage Foundation proposed had, to a substantial degree, already happened in the ten years of reorganized corporate life. The implication of their complaint was that the post office was redundant, a geriatric custodian of postcards, love letters, frivolous minutiae, documents no longer requiring delivery service duplicating electronic verification, and trifling but expensive services not clearly tied to the national purpose of elevating capitalism to its higher estate. And regardless of differing value judgments on such matters, the postal system had to pay its way. Some of the more pragmatic folks at Heritage, and Stockman in particular, thought the public wasn't entitled to services from its government, anyway.

TOR 340 years or more, 137 of them before the Colonies rebelled, a lawfully ordained postal-service monopoly has functioned here. With the evolution of constitutional government it has kept pace and grown while retaining a conscious tradition of care and concern for its patrons. In spite of the complicated logistics and vicissitudes involved in expanding across a continent, it has done so with integrity and a sense of obligation. An unofficially licensed bit of poetic commitment distilled the essence of the post-office mystique in 1913.

William Mitchell Kendall, one of the architects of the enormous main post office next to the now demolished Romanesque Pennsylvania Railroad terminal in New York, searched for a message to carve on the 280-foot frieze across the front of the building. Kendall's father, an instructor in classical languages, turned up something from Herodotus that translated clumsily into English. Kendall recomposed the words to give them the loftiness appropriate to a cathedral, and they remain today a monument to the ideal of service, if something of a grotesquerie in the technology soon to overrun us:

Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds.

The patron saint of the postal system is, of course, Benjamin Franklin, a man for all seasons in any era but well nigh perfect for his time. Named one of two postmasters general by the Crown in 1753, Franklin began at once to define the service and create the structure that brought it to the point where it was reorganized and half wrecked as a service agency ten years ago. Franklin launched the office on its

initial mission—building post roads. He soon had mail moving by stage at night, and post roads extending from Maine to Florida, and in 1760 actually reported a surplus to the Crown. The British fired him in 1774, suspecting, correctly, his sympathies with independence. The next year, a continental congress met to discuss a separate government and named Franklin postmaster general of the Colonies at \$1,000 a year. The post office became the second department of government; the first was the U.S. Office of Indian Affairs.

Besides the post roads, what had to be established was a policy that emphasized, first and always, that the postal system was a communications service for delivering the mail. From the beginning the vital importance of journals, newspapers, books, and all forms of written material was all but sanctified, and, of course, subsidized. In fact, newspaper owners inevitably became favored candidates for post-office patronage. Another Renaissance man, Thomas Jefferson, looked sourly on the mail system as a reservoir of election workers for incumbent power, a safe reservation to which loyalist officeholders could be consigned.

In the late 1960s, subsidies to keep the post office expanding went sky-high as railroad transportation collapsed in most parts of the country, and mail volume, attracted by deficit rates for business, engulfed overburdened facilities. It was then that a publicity-prone Congress abandoned its responsibilities to the recommendations of the presidential commission and Mr. Kappel.

HETHER the plot was intentional or a development originating in congressional neglect, a postal system that once built roads, funded transport, helped enlighten the nation, and faithfully performed its historic mission, is being transformed into a merged partner, if not the handmaiden, of big business. In pursuit of a corporate rather than a service function, it has produced "less frequent and more inconvenient service," as con-

sumer spokesman Ralph Nader has repeatedly complained. It operates as a corporate-designed cargo and shipping organization, handling and hauling billions of contest entries. advertising and promotion packets. magazines, merchandise, political solicitations, credit-card printouts. bills, and horoscope scams that would swamp any system in a deluge of almost immeasurable volume. A very large part of this growing flow is paid for at discounted prices promoted to lure more and more mass mailers into preparing and presorting their bulk shipments for transport through the delivery system. The largest mailers get the largest discounts. Individuals outside the mass-mailing brotherhood pay maximum rates, with no discounts and generally get slower, erratic service.

Although one may yet develop, there appears to be no real move afoot to overturn the conversion of the post office into a captive subsidiary of the industrial-mercantile system, Congressman William Ford last May made hold to remind the administration and the public of the simple phrase in Article I. Section 8. of the Constitution: "The Congress shall have Power...To establish Post Offices and Post Roads," This power, by judicial construction over the years, is "almost unlimited." said Mr. Ford, modified only when it conflicts with the Bill of Rights. Drastically curtailed appropriations threaten to undermine a postal system in the service of the people; "And so, I want to announce [that] I do not intend to preside passively over the dissolution of this so-called 'document delivery company.'"

But, alas, when summer came and Congress voted on the budget cuts, killing vital service functions in postal operations, Mr. Ford's Democratic party colleagues joined the Reagan-Stockman fundamentalists and gave their votes to the Heritage Foundation and the popular president who subscribes to the revised dogma of the age. To keep going, the House committee considered closing as many as 10,000 small and rural post offices as the only way to provide funds for pay raises demanded by powerful postal unions,

and to deal with lost allocations. The mising of 25 percent of the nation's 40,000 post offices would doubtless set off a scream of objection, which Congress would have to measure against Mr. Reagan's charismatic popularity. If mass affection for the president holds firm in the wake of raises for postal workers already getting \$23,300 a year for what Tolstoy called "woodpecker" jobs, and the prospect of closed post offices across the continent, Mr. Reagan could possibly declare himself emperor by acclamation.

Under new contracts agreed on in late July, the average wage of nearly \$22,000 among 660,000 employees—a number roughly equal to the population of North Carolina or Nebraska—will rise enough to make postal workers the economic elite of the land. In three years the 400,000 or more now making \$23,300 in earnings and benefits will be getting, by current projection, close to \$30,000—with guaranteed protection against any loss through infla-

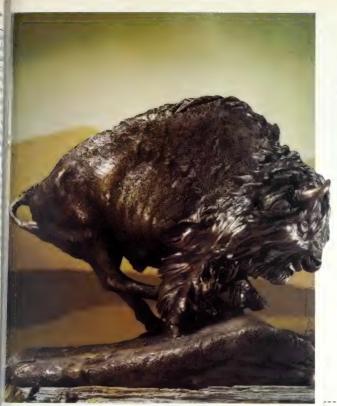
This unparalleled agreement would appear for the time being to forestall the "labor dispute of potentially monstrous proportions" that Congressman Ford had foreseen. The prospect of a 45-cent postage stamp, predicted at one point, gave way to Postmaster General Bolger's reconsidered outlook of 20 cents now, plus whatever inflation adds. Yet no one in Congress has argued for years that all subsidies, extending in an unbroken line back to Ben Franklin's day, are necessary. Postage benefits and the labor force in recent years have been sharply cut.

DUBLICATIONS heavily endowed with advertising, or chain-owned newspapers—even small-town ones—bought up to saturate marketing reas, rather than establish or extend rums for enlightenment, ought to have no claim on subsidized postage. Yet, unless the direction of the last couple of years is changed, something essential to civilized life in America is going to be exterminated: voluntary associations of citizens and

the distribution of limited-circulatic journals that, by their content, dive sity, and intellectual concerns, cannelicit from commercial advertise the revenue required for surviva Death by budget cut will follow: life-support systems are unplurged

At the moment, the U.S. Post Service gets \$1.6 billion for snl sidies and services. Of this, \$86 million supports reduced postas rates to nonprofit organizations suc as churches charities fraternal o ders, veterans, museums, librarie the blind, and educational publical tions. Special rates, or forgone in come, account for most of these mi lions-meaning the difference be tween the cost of a mailing and wha is charged. Thus, for pennies, hug organizations seeking to take ove the presidency can mail millions of two-ounce appeals for 3.8 cents each and collect—as in the case of Mr Reagan's election operation and Moral Majority fund-raising-mil lions of dollars. Yet if a group of in dividuals is moved to seek the ouste of some unwanted oaf in a local o county government, and dispatche a mailing to 500 citizens, each two ounce mailing costs 37 cents. For the \$19 it costs some nationwide mailer to send 500 appeals across the coun try, it costs someone else \$185 to mail 500 two-ounce appeals within a half a mile of the post office in his hometown.

The destructive effects of wiping out service discounts to noncommercial resources that could not otherwise survive (barring philanthropy) were made clear in an alarmed statement issued this summer by Lee A. Fritschler, a postal-rate commissioner. In an authoritive, factual warning published in the Washington Post, Mr. Fritschler pointed out that the \$500 million withheld from the budget will have virtually no effect on the post office but might destroy a lot of charitable work in the country. At present, a fund-raising appeal and report is mailed by the National Easter Seal Society for crippled persons at the rate of 3.8 cents. The society's 57 million pieces will cost, under the newly imposed bottom-line discipline of budget cuts, \$1.5 million more than the current





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For the first time in its history, the National Wildlife Federation has commissioned the creation of a collection of original sculptures portraying North America's great wildlife.

Inaugurating this historic collection will be a superb sculpture of the American buffalo, entitled *Thunder on the Plains*. Finely detailed, crafted in cold-cast bronze and meticulously hand-finished, it is a brilliant study of the bison and an impressive work of art.

This new and original work has been created for the National Wildlife Federation by one of America's most gifted wildlife sculptors — Chapel. It portrays the bison in full charge — wheeling in mid-stride past a clump of prairie sage. The ominous crescent horns, the flaring nostrils, the surprising agility of its powerful body — all are captured with an artistry that is completely true to nature. A quality valued throughout the long tradition of bronze animal sculpture.

To faithfully capture all the rich detail and subtle nuances of the sculptor's art, the work

will be crafted in cold-cast bronze — a medium capable of holding even finer detail than traditional hot-cast bronze. Each sculpture will be individually cast from a carefully prepared sculptor's blend of powdered bronze and resins. Once hardened, it will be meticulously finished with a fine patina — handrubbed to a soft luster.

Thunder on the Plains is available in a limited edition – reserved exclusively for those who order from the Federation's first collection of original wildlife sculptures during 1981. The appointed issuing agent. The Franklin Gallery, will fulfill all valid orders, and then the edition will be permanently closed. A Certificate of Authenticity from the National Wildlife Federation will accompany each sculpture.

As an original sculpture that will enrich your home. *Thunder on the Plains* will be a truly rewarding acquisiton. A work of art in the honored tradition of fine animal sculpture. One that will remain a source of enjoyment and a treasured family possession.

To reserve this important new work, simply return your application by December 31, 1981. No payment need accompany your order, but the attached application must be postmarked by December 31st.

# THUNDER ON THE DIAINS

Must be postmarked by December 31, 1981.

Limit: One per person.

The National Wildlife Federation C/o The Franklin Gallery Franklin Center, Pennsylvania 19091

Please accept my reservation for *Thunder on the Plains*, to be crafted for me in cold-cast bronze at \$195.\* plus \$2.50 for shipping and handling.

I need send no money now. When my sculpture is ready to be sent to me, I will be billed for my deposit of \$39.50\* and, after shipment, for the balance in four monthly installments of \$39.50\* each.

\*P is my applicable state sales far

Signature Mr.		
Mrs. Miss		
IVIISS	F 10 97 140 2	
Address		

State, Zip

charge—just for postage. There it is the charitable organization and its sole source of revenue that will feel the pain, not the postal system. The transfer of money from such citizens' institutions to the Pentagon will produce an appalling loss apparently not realized, or regarded with indifference, by those holding the revised perceptions now valued in the government.

At still another level, some candles lighted against the dark will go out. Many all-text, or largely text journals, quarterlies, and occasional publications have already died under the merciless impact of an increase of 400 percent in mailing costs in the past ten years. Those that have survived this far will be given the coup de grâce under a postal system that solicits 50 million Reader's Digest contest mailings or 60 million soan coupons addressed to "occupant," which, because of their enormous volume, offer financial incentives to use the post office for marketing opportunities. Small publications of literary or intellectual value, often dealing in ideas and analysis of little interest to the more easily promoted trash periodicals like People, Us, and their supermarket companions, can neither attract much advertising nor avail themselves of postage discounts offered for presorting, metering, and bundling shipments to zip-code areas. Their circulations are not large enough, and probably will never be, to meet the discount and economic requirements.

To cite just one of many endangered periodicals: The Progressive dates from the early, engaging populist politics of Wisconsin, A journal of criticism, politics, and opinion, it was forced last year to carry on a costly lawsuit as a result of an article about making nuclear bombs, which the government first sought to censor. It is a truly independent publication, and in the last ten years has even managed to grow from a circulation of 29,000 to 39,000, a remarkable feat in itself. In that time, its mailing costs have increased nearly 400 percent, from \$708.97 to more than \$3,800 an issue, Erwin Knoll, editor, suspects that the postal service computes rates "with less than scientific precision." Abandonment of a policy that for two centuries encouraged low-cost postal rates to disseminate a wide variety of viewpoints is, he says, "a pernicious action that is producing tragic consequences."

AST YEAR the postal service handled 106.3 billion pieces of mail, up from 90 billion I five years ago. Labor costs were 85 percent of \$16.4 billion in revenues. Of the total U.S. mail volume, 56.7 percent is first-class mail, of which 6 percent-which doesn't grow much-is person-toperson mail. The rest is business and commercial much of it transactional -hills tay notices etc Another 3 percent expansion this year will dump 200,000 more tons of mail on a postal load of 6.5 million tons. The service seems to be trapped in the frenzy of the Sorcerer's Apprentice: overwhelmed by the response it has invited, and not free to alter because it is dependent for revenues on expansion that it can never get enough of while still providing a communications service.

By its own assessment, the post office claims it delivers 95 percent of local mail, which is two thirds of first-class tonnage, overnight within a 250-mile range. Beyond that range, it takes two or three days and 13 percent of it fails to make the schedule. For a country that has lost its railroads, on which effective mail distribution successfully relied for a century—with railroad terminals and postal centers often connected—this delivery goal, if achieved, might be a relatively noteworthy accomplishment.\*

But the fact is that the post system does poorly in delivering the mail. There remains always the five day delivery record for mail travelir twenty-five blocks in New York, ar "five days between Washington an New York," according to Congress man Ford, along with countle other exceptions.\*

If a patron wants guaranteed nex day delivery, with postage returne if the promise is not kept, he take his letter (or a packet of up to six teen ounces) to certain designate post offices and pays \$9.70 for cross-country mailing. This and category with speedy handling calle priority mail brought \$800 millio into the post office last year-all c it to buy the assurance of getting th mail delivered on time. Except for the expensive express mail (the \$9.70 item cited here) the post offic returns no postage and bears no financial obligation for loss or dam age to uninsured posted mail. If they lose it when it is entrusted to theil care, the loss is yours. On the other hand, United Parcel Service provide superior delivery schedules and in surance of \$100 per packet, paymen guaranteed.

Frustration and apprehension con cerning delivery is a concomitant of the system, and a bit of collusion now and then crops up as ways are unofficially explored to expedite the service. An investigation, and a plea of guilty by a postal employee for taking bribes, recently disclosed that midtown Manhattan firms were paying the carriers and truckmen to get their mail delivered first. The amounts were small, as little as five dollars a week, for local express service. Commercial firms complaining about slow deliveries were told nothing could be done. But mutually organized ingenuity improved matters and priority deliveries were ar-

<sup>\*</sup> For sixty years, beginning in 1893 in Philadelphia, underground networks of pneumatic tubes dispatched first-class mail from central depots to local delivery points in large cities. Such a system was one of the wonders of Paris. This form of mail transport was ended by 1953 in favor of truck transport, thought to be a cheaper and more flexible technology. Now, mail is trucked out of cities to great bulk sorting centers, then trucked back through congested traffic for local distribution. Mail destined for no more than a few blocks away now sometimes takes several days to get there.

<sup>\*</sup>I compute the overdue volume at 4,742,563,000 pieces, or 286,000 tons. The legal load limit for eighten-wheel tractor trailers is forty tons. Thus it would require 7,150 Peterbilts to carry it. Tailgating each other along the interstate they would form a column 135.4 miles long. If they stopped and you drove past them in the other lane at the speed limit, it would take you two and a half hours to pass the volume of undelivered mail.

aged for payoffs. There are 16,000 stomers in the Murray Hill district, nich simply opened up some oppornities on a first-pay, first-served sis. Imprisonment or hanging was ce the punishment for the sort of ckedness that led to trifling with e King's post. But imprisonment worse also used to be imposed for arging more than 6 percent intert, adulterating bread, and similar ortcomings now sanctified by comon practice.

There have always been postal orkers, pecking away at drudge ork, taking advantage of small oportunities. One of them, in the twoent-stamp era, which ended on July , 1932, when the price was increased penny, was William Faulkner, who, a young man, worked in a little ost office in Mississippi. Out of oredom, apparently, he chucked side envelopes he couldn't read or ommitted some such infraction of olicy. Faulkner wasn't there very ing, possibly because once, when eproached for his careless ways, he roused that he'd be damned if he ntended "to be at the beck and call f every idiot that's got two cents."

DEEPENING sense of anxiety and gloom characterizes the condition to which the U.S. postal system has come. Alnost fifty years ago, on the day I sent my last two-cent letter, it was 1 marvelous if perhaps not fully appreciated fact of daily life. There were two deliveries a day then and everyone knew the collection-box pickup schedules and where to intercept the carrier to hand him letters. He brought the mail to your door, not to some building lobby or sorting room. On the morning of July 5 I received a short letter from my friend Clara, newly graduated from high school in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, with an unromantically blunt message. Her mother had withdrawn permission for her to go to a DeMolay dance with me that forthcoming Saturday evening. Crushed but moving fast, I wrote an invitation to an alternative hope for the dance, Ruby Thiele. We all had telephones but they were not used

for invitations to the dance in that gritty, Depression-ridden day, I put a two-cent stamp on the envelope and ran down Vickroy Avenue to the end of the trolley line where a collection box promised a mid-morning pickup. Ruby got my letter in the early afternoon and, since she lived near the post office and had perhaps circumvented consultation with her mother, got a penny postcard of acceptance into our carrier's pouch and into my hands late that same afternoon. For a combined postage cost of five cents-a pair of two-cent letters and a stamped penny postcard-Clara, Ruby, and I had been served by an effective system of communications with a distinctly human, personal character.

Half a century later and ten years after the postal system has gone corporate, the outlook for the publicservice aspect of citizens' mail is bleak, even final, unless it can be emancipated from the commercial forces to which it has been consigned. A new overhaul and redefinition of Benjamin Franklin's old expanded office is needed. What is not tolerable is the categorization of mail as a superfluous "publicly supported document delivery company" that the Stockman right wing would declare obsolete and whose allocations they would then redistribute to fight Soviet penetration in El Salvador.

If gloom and discontent have been alleviated by conferring economic privilege on postal employees, increasing disenchantment and disservice afflicts people stuck in interminable lines before post-office windows while 50 million Reader's Digest contest mailings or 60 million soap coupons addressed to "occupants" get attention. Some dramatic change or promise is required, something to energize the system on behalf of people, create goodwill, demonstrate a concern for individuals-something that would encourage and honor the citizens who use the postal universe, with its awesome burdens. It should be something that would make sending notes and letters a comparative bargain and a convenience. Something like the nickel postcard and the ten-cent letter.

If that is too drastic, well, the nation might settle for a ten-cent postcard and a fifteen-cent letter, pending control of inflation and a bottomed-out literacy curve. The emphasis on personal mail, not—for once and for this time—bulk commercial mail, should acknowledge the need for a new classification of mail for individuals at preferred rates limited to them; not, certainly, open to mass-produced stuff often called junk but actually the printed and published products of the marketing industry.

The new citizens' mail and the design for processing it should accommodate the high-speed processing technology that is now available. Zip codes would be required in prescribed locations for scanning. Postcards and envelopes could be of explicit dimensions compatible with separation and sorting mechanisms. If the plan were to be introduced with the forthcoming nine-digit zip code, it might help expedite the code's acceptance. The nation is stuck with the zip-code technology anyway, loathe it as some will, but bulk handling of industrial mail is probably too far advanced to be reversed. Something should be added to this hoggish use of postal facilities to make communication and association among people both common and civilized. Writing and getting letters might again become a vital activity.

This, then, would be the new class of personal mail, person to person only, not computer stuff and not photocopied, with a machine-disgorged flimsy reaching the addressee. Use of this classification for anything other than personal mail would be an offense: unlawful use of postage.

There will never again be two deliveries a day as in 1932. We will be lucky to keep getting any mail at all on Saturdays. We need not, though, accept electronic transmission exclusively, and the dominance of our postal capacity by industry alone—not to the point where the human pleasure and scale of true correspondence, in the full meaning of the word, is diminished along with other lost blessings of life.

HARPER'S/DECEMBER 1981



Crash tests using dummies can help engineers to design safer cars and trucks. That's why we developed much of the technology that has become standard for barrier crash testing throughout the industry

For example, the Hybrid II anthropomorphic dummy, developed by GM, was the prototype for the government's test dummy.

But we didn't stop there. Our commitment to safety led us into even more advanced research. Today, GM is pushing safety technology forward with new computer-modeling techniques. We've also developed static crusher tests as well as scale-model testing. And our biomedical research is helping us to understand better the human body's response to accident-induced trauma.

All this science and engineering can't take the place of driving carefully and using seat belts. Please do your part: buckle up whenever you drive. For our part, we've accepted a role of leadership in safety. Last year, we spent over half a billion dollars, not including equipment installed on vehicles, to carry out that role.

That's the GM idea of how to use technology to build cars and trucks. Attention to details where you don't see them, as well as where you do. Appearance and comfort may sometimes sell a car, but today's customers demand real value.

Our goal, as the world's largest automotive manufacturer, is to maintain our lead by using new technology to build cars and trucks that perform better and last longer, with lower maintenance costs, than those built by any competitor-American or foreign

# General Motors The future of transportation is here.



#### Harper's

# **THE AMERICANS**

Why we baffle the Europeans

by Luigi Barzini

TEAR IS Europe's prime mover, or rather a collection of fears. Europe's fear of the Soviet Union is, of course, paramount. What larval European union exists today was created after the Second World War by the threat of a Soviet invasion. and by Soviet support and financing of revolutionary parties in the West. Another fear is seldom mentioned in official society, in its books, magazines, or newspapers. It is Europeans' fear of themselves. They have made so many mistakes, fought so many demented wars, started so many ruinous revolutions. endured so many catastrophes, believed so many myths, followed blindly so many spuriously charismatic leaders that they are always uneasy when considering their own future. They know anything might happen in Europe, because everything has happened.

Then there is the fear of the United States. Fear, of course, is not the exact word-anxiety, apprehension, doubt, perplexity, uneasiness may be more accurate terms. After the last world war, and even before. Europeans felt that they knew what the United States was and that they could always rely on its immense power and noble intentions. It was the most wealthy, disinterested, disciplined, advanced, organized, and invincible country, not only of the day but of all time. It almost always defended with gold and blood what was dearest to Western man: liberty in a just society. In the Forties and Fifties Europeans had no doubts that America would be able to keep the peace all over the world, as surely as Britain had kept it in the past, and that they had nothing to worry about. These convictions were fortified by the Europeans' incredible misconception of American reality, shaped mainly by

what they wanted to believe. Yet today the fear springs anew every time the real America does not behave exactly as the imaginary America of Europeans' preconceptions.

Twenty years ago, the Italian foreign minister. Amintore Fanfani, an authoritative professor of economic history in his spare time, told me he had deduced the Americans' political plans for the future. "These," he said, "are their intentions." General X had made a speech, he enumerated, The New York Times had published an editorial, the secretary of state had issued a communiqué, the president had given an unambiguous answer to a particular question at a press conference. Senator Y had given an interview. As in those children's games where, when the numbered spots are connected with lines, an unsuspected figure appears, he had connected all these declarations, statements, and articles, and had come up with a tidy answer. When he saw the incredulity on my face, he asked, "Don't you believe it?" I explained that yes, he could be right, but he could also be entirely wrong, because the United States was not Bismarck's empire or any other ancient European nationstate, but something sui generis. How could he know what America was when even eminent European political observers who had lived years in America had reached deformed conclusions? Georges Clemenceau, for instance, who taught at a girls' school in Connecticut, and for a while was married to one of his students, a girl from Springfield, Massachusetts, reputedly said: "Americans have no capacity for abstract thought and make bad coffee." He hadn't learned that every American, whether he knows it or not, is an eighteenth-century philosophe at heart, and that the coffee at times

Luigi Barsini, one of Italy's leading journalists, is a regular contributor to many international publications and the author of seteral books on politics and culture. He lives in Rome. can be excellent surely better at its worst than

UROPEAN IDEAS of America, as well as American ideas of Europe, on which relations and the common future ultimately depend, are predictably superapposted, erroneous, based on insufficient and distorted information, on myths. idées recues, rhetorical exaggerations, wishful thinking, cheap novels, and the cinema, Superimposed like layers of successive snowfalls are World War I America, a young, naïve, generous, heroic country on its way to becoming a benevolent empire: World War II America, with its immense industrial capacity, capable of placing vast armies, fleets, air forces, with diabolical weapons and all their stores. anywhere in the world in a matter of weeks. led by rough but efficient generals and admirals who could destroy the enemy, indeed, any enemy; Truman's America, of the Marshall Plan, NATO, the Korean war, the defense of liberty, indeed, anybody's liberty; and contemporary America, a country apparently full of doubts and controversies, in which outlandish new ideas and experiments are always being tested, where foreign policy meanders from time to time, cults and crackpots pullulate, but in which all the past Americas are still very much alive, in perennial debate among themselves. And these debates are not, as they would be in other countries, a cause of disruption, decadence, and weakness, but of eternally renewed vigor and progress. The United States is believed to be a healthy and hardy, if somewhat turbulent, country, which, in the end, always finds its way. You'll always find it on your side, the side of the angels.

The Depression, the murders of John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, and Martin Luther King, race riots, the defeat in Southeast Asia, Watergate, Nixon's resignation, the shooting of President Reagan, and many other unfortunate vicissitudes that left their mark on Americans did not greatly modify the reassuring European image of the United States. Europeans knew that similar, or worse, mistakes and misfortunes happened in the best of countries. Most of them, in fact, could be considered beneficial-healthy pauses or alarm signals necessary for the review and correction of past errors and delusions. Ancient wisdom welcomed scandals: Oportet ut scandala eveniant, said the Romans. Scandals never really changed the character of a people; and, especially, they could not change the fundamental character of the American people, who were, as one saw daily in westerns or war movies, bigger than life-size, decent, plucky, resolute, manly, brave, ruthless, successful, always determined to destroy the villains, defend the underdog, see justice triumph, and hang dishonest men and horse thieves.

#### All things to all people

HAT IS the United States? The search for a reliable answer to this question is becoming a matter of life and death, European statesmen know that their decisions in an eventual crisis will depend on an exact estimate of the probable behavior of America, A wrong guess may spell disaster, as it did when Napoleon II believed that the United States would not interfere with his Mexican plans, when first Kaiser Wilhelm II and then Hitler thought the United States would not fight a European war, or when the North Koreans believed that the Americans would not defend South Korea, There is, of course, not one answer to the question but many, most of them nearly true, all of them demonstrably true, and all of them confusing. The United States is protean, as many things as there are vantage points. The Americans themselves cannot always be depended on for a reliable portraval of their country. One can rarely trust a son for an objective description of his mother. Of course, nations are as multiform and incomprehensible as individuals, and, nowadays, to define any nation other than the United States and the Soviet Union is a matter of little importance. But a reliable definition of America is something else. Destiny depends on it.

Europeans who have been there, who have met Americans in Europe or consulted an encyclopedia or an almanac, affirm that it is a nation, a great nation, inhabited by people as typically what they are as are the inhabitants of any other nation, recognizable by their language, clothes, habits, and the food they eat. Now that America is an empire, a reluctant empire. Europeans believe it must conduct itself more or less like previous empires. From this, many, like Professor Fanfani, deduce that there must be a central command, a Kanzlei, somewhere in Washington, where all decisions-domestic, foreign, military, economic -are firmly taken, plans elaborated, orders given and obeyed, and initiatives of all kinds harmoniously coordinated, possibly with the aid of computers (the ordering of armaments based on foreign-policy lines, for instance). Europeans are certain that somebody in Washington is perennially worried by the need to preserve the balance of power in the world.

LL THIS, of course, is almost true. The United States is definitely a nation, a great nation, in many ways the greatest nation of all times. It has almost lways behaved as one in a crisis. It will probbly do so again if necessary. But then no naon or empire has ever been entirely logical nd coherent, and the United States is no exeption. It can bitterly disappoint European mericanologists and Americanophiles, whenver, as Henry Kissinger wrote, its foreign poly fluctuates unexpectedly "between euphoria nd panic." Why, these European observers sk, did the mighty and well-informed United tates not conquer North Vietnam in a few eeks, destroy Castro in time, foresee and preent the revolution in Iran or the invasion of fghanistan? Why did it lose control of the lorn of Africa, and why did it not prearrange cceptable solutions for Nicaragua and El Salador? At such times Europeans are puzzled, lled with concern, alarm, despondency, and, ltimately, fear.

The United States can also be seen as an npredictable loose conglomeration of hetergeneous people of different races, origins, ultures, religions, and values, further transormed and conditioned by the varied habats and climates of their countries, and which ange from Scandinavian (the North) through talian (California) to Andalusian and North frican (the Southwest). These multiform eople are united mainly by their resolute, eaverlike determination to construct a more ational and just society, possibly one day a erfect society, which, of course, like the canedrals of old, may never be completed. The ream of the future is important. The United itates has been compared to a man on a biycle, who will collapse if he stops pedaling nd moving ahead-unlike other, older naions, which are what they are immutably, vhether standing still, going backward, or adancing. In its relentless pursuit of ultimate nd unreachable perfection, it has been decribed as a daring experiment, one generation head of everybody else, the last word in nodernity, the future that works, the next cenury. (I remember the General Motors exhibiion at the 1939 World's Fair, a vast miniature panorama of imaginary wonders of the future. ione of which exists today: fruit trees were apped by plastic domes to accelerate ripenng and isolate them from diseases and bugs, and rosaries of driverless automobiles ran long the highways.) One must not be deeived by the science-fiction appearance of. nany things American. The dream is not enirely modern. It is partly an anachronistic experiment based on eighteenth-century antici-

pations (Benjamin Franklin described his people's future achievements with stupefying accuracy). Like its dream, America's symbols have changed little. The style of federal architecture, at least until a generation ago; the eagle engraved on official stationery, on embassy plates and matchboxes; the striped and starred flag; the solemn prose of the presidents' inaugural addresses—all tenaciously preserve the fashions of Louis XVI and George III, particularly the flag, whose neoclassic design could have upholstered an elegant gilded sofa at Versailles (the stars) or made an incroyable's fashionable waistcoat (the stripes).

"Americans have

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thought and

From Americans' deep-seated awareness that they have been entrusted with an experiment never before tried by man derive the national characteristics most baffling to Europeans. One is their lack of respect for other people's precedents and experiences, and for the past in general. The great seal of the Republic on the back of every dollar bill bears the proud motto Novus ordo seclorum, meaning, more or less, "The world and history begin with us." Every problem is born that very morning. Americans did not bother to consult beforehand (to mention but one of the latest examples) the French about Vietnam, a country France had conquered with some difficulty eighty years before, governed for decades, and knew well, or about the Vietnamese, a people it had fought intermittently for a century, with disastrous results.

Another corollary is the philanthropic mis-





## EVERY DAY THE AVERAGE BUSINESSMAN COMMUTES TO THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

It wouldn't take very long for the average twentieth century businessman to feel right at home in the average nineteenth century office.

Because for the most part, the way office workers and executives

work and the tools they use are merely refinements of procedures and products invented in the 1800s or before.

The typewriter was patented in 1827. The pencil with an eraser attached was patented in 1858. The

telephone was invented in 1876 and the ball-point pen dates from 1888.

No wonder productivity in the office isn't keeping pace with the times. At Xerox, helping people work more productively is our business.

Today we produce advanced machines that not only make copies of incredible quality, but automatically reduce, collate and staple sets together.

Machines that create, store and retrieve documents faster than humanly possible. Machines that print out computer information faster than ordinary computer printers.

And machines that help business professionals, who earn 80% of the salaries paid by American business, create reports

with charts, tables and graphics, in hours instead of days.

There's even a special cable—called the Xerox Éthernet cable—that can connect these machines into an information network. So that the people in your office and in offices around the country can have the information they need to get their jobs done.

In fact, Xerox people, machines and services can not only

help you stay on top of your job, but even get ahead of it.

Which can put you a century ahead of where you were yesterday.

**XEROX** 

Luigi Barzini
THE
AMERICANS

sionary and didactic urge that makes America see itself as the world's best hope, the mentor. precentor and example to all men. One of the moral justifications for the 1776 rebellion against the mother country-besides independence-was the hope of incorporating in the new ration all modern improvements, philosophic and juridical, not only for America's benefit but also for the sake of other countries. including England. Until a few years ago, this conviction was freely, artlessly, proudly, and candidly advertised. Now, of course, many Milliams Americans, are incapable of faith in the task assigned by History to the United States. They ask how America can still set itself up as a shining example to the world when it is haunted by ghastly and insoluble problems, some of them the result of attempted solutions to older problems. Nevertheless. one must always remember that what Henry Kissinger calls "the traditional sense of universal moral mission," even if muted or left unsaid, is still one of the motivations (or, at times, indispensable rhetorical justifications) of American national behavior. It must never be disregarded (or fully relied on) when dealing with the United States.



HE SUCCESS of the American model ha been undeniable. To be sure, who non-Americans tried most eagerly t imitate were the gross material as pects: the pursuit of a bigger and better GNP efficiency: scientific discoveries and technological logical improvements; the forced consumr tion of goods, made possible by widespreaaffluence: the training of specialists, omnis cient world authorities in their tiny fields bu dangerously naïve and credulous in all others More difficult, though not impossible, to imi tate-for distant peoples who did not hav the American historical background and mora commitment-were the political models: uni versal suffrage; a bicameral parliament; hu man rights. Some Latin American nation anxiously put up almost credible parodies to please the United States: a neoclassical capito surmounted by a dome; a constitution very much like the original Philadelphia document a bicameral parliament: a theoretical division of powers; and, in Brazil and Mexico, the sep aration of the land into states. Behind the fa cade, of course, life in those countries went or more or less in its own cruel, shabby, ancient! almost unalterable way.

The American model has been irresistible in many other respects. It dominates the world today in large and small matters, even in fads and fashions, newly invented sports and gadgets of all kinds. A few years ago, blue-jeaned and long-haired vouths everywhere demonstrated, in imitation of American students. against the Vietnam war, which was scarcely their business. Now they all jog, like the former president of the United States. Men all over the world automatically turn to the "American way" of doing anything, to the American solutions, perhaps only because the Americans were chronologically the first to face the problems. Such solutions are the handiest and easiest, and may, of course, be the best, but may, occasionally, be the worst in a different context and time. American achievements have transformed and often improved life in America, in the Western world, and in Europe, but also life in the most remote and primitive corners of the terraqueous globe. Most American ideas are sensible and practical, and most the result of long experiments, trials, and errors. Many are European ideas transplanted, tested, acclimatized, and, as the labels on sundry food products say in the United States, "enriched." Admittedly, most American hopes are more than American or European hopes; they are universal hopes, too.

Very few imitators have understood that the secret of the United States' tremendous success is not merely technology, know-how, the work

thic, or greed. It was a spiritual wind that lrove the Americans irresistibly ahead. Beand their compulsion to improve man's lot vas at first an all-pervading religiousness, later he sense of duty, the submission to a Godgiven code of personal behavior, the accepance of a God-given task to accomplish and of all the necessary sacrifices. Few foreigners inderstand this, even today. The United States ooks to them like the triumph of soulless naterialism. The religious fervor and the Protstant ethic that were so blatantly evident in he past are certainly less visible now. But hey are still there, even if few Americans nention them. They are feebler, discredited ov intellectuals, corroded by the doubts of hese impious times, but without them, or vhat is left of them. America would not be vhat it is. Tout se tient.

Better than God

THE CONVICTION that one was obeying God's commands was also true, of course, of most previous empires. Charles Martel destroyed the Arab nvaders at Poitiers in A.D. 732 in the name of Christ: the Venetians fought the infidels for centuries in the name of Mark the Evanzelist: the Western allies who defeated the Ottoman fleet at Lepanto called themselves the Christian League; monks brandishing the crucifix went with the conquering Spanish armies n Central and South America to baptize and absolve Indians before they were massacred; the Anglican church was one of the first buildings, together with the fort and the barracks and the club, to be erected by the British in every conquered colony (George Orwell called British imperialism "forcible evangelizing").

But there always was and still is something unique and different in the American drive, something that must not be overlooked. A disturbingly sacrilegious Promethean element is detectable, an impious challenge to God's will. It is as if while zealously serving the Deity, Americans knew better than He and tried to improve His own inadequate and obsolete idea of the universe and man. They strived to annul Adam's curse, la condition humaine, man's predicament, at all cost, and partially succeeded: man's life has been prolonged beyond all hope (the ultimate ideal is to defeat God once and for all and make man immortal; they now preserve frozen corpses in liquid nitrogen at Berkeley, waiting for science to manage the resurrection). Man no longer earns his bread by the sweat of his brow, indeed, less and less bread is consumed;

air conditioning prevents perspiration; Americans sweat only at play; and not all women have to suffer pain when giving birth.

The American "dream," the somewhat impractical knight-errant idealism, must be understood in conjunction with another fundamental, ever-present, and sometimes contradictory American trait: pragmatism. The two don't always go well together. Pragmatism is the belief that all problems can be solved combined with the urge to solve all of them in the shortest time. Americans do not like to admit failure or defeat. This contrast between idealism and pragmatism, for instance, is visible in the contradiction between their fondness for issuing high-minded pronouncements (imparting severe lessons of correct democratic behavior) and their occasional propensity, when necessary and opportune, for invading foreign countries, corrupting foreign officials, and financing unsavory tyrants and supplying them with a surfeit of weapons and "advisers."

To be sure, bribing officials and propping up tyrants is part of normal imperial business, occasionally essential for the defense of a country's interests and the world's peace.

"America has been described as a daring experiment, the future that works, the next century."



#### Luigi Barzini THE AMERICANS

Vet the Americans, a fundamentally decent people, suffer when accused of duplicity, hypocrisy, imposture, fraud, or lack of consistency between their declared principles and their actions. Such forms of cynicism and dishonesty they mostly attribute to Europeans, Christopher Newman, Henry James's maschera of this innocent "new man" in The American. thought only Europe was "unscrupulous and impure." Americans are more reluctant than most people to admit to shoddy behavior. They are easily troubled by remorse. McKinley "prayed all night" and was absolved by God before deciding that the Philippines should become a ward of the United States, Lyndon Johnson clung desperately to the thesis that the Vietnam expedition had been a response to a liberty-loving ally who had asked for help when attacked by a foreign aggressor. He could not bear to think that his country had involved itself in what could be interpreted as an un-American war of conquest and destruction. The Vietnam problem could not be left unsolved. A new and better country had to be set up on the ruins. The Americans' sense of mission and pride, their confidence in their power and invincibility, but above all their pragmatism, the need to finish the job at all cost, prevented them, until it was too late, from admitting they had made a mistake, and from packing up and leaving Vietnam to its tragic destiny. They tried to disentangle themselves, in the end, by means of non-American, devious, "unscrupulous and impure" Machiavellian methods-secret diplomacy, the application of the balance of power, and the raison d'étatmethods that are the acceptance of the fact that private morality cannot regulate all public affairs. "We cannot," warned George Kennan, "when it comes to dealings between governments, assign to moral values the same significance we give them in personal life." No wonder, when the Europeans have to guess which way the United States will jump, knowing that their own future and that of the whole world are at stake, they are frightened and cautious. Will Americans be pragmatic or idealistic tomorrow?

First to the fire

VEN IF the aforementioned traits are characteristic of Americans, they are not exclusively American. What does frighten foreigners, Europeans in particular, is America's impatience. This might also be called impetuosity, ardor, eagerness to apply premature formulas and achieve rapid results. Its origins are obscure. For more

than two centuries, foreign visitors to the United States have noticed with awe that i inhabitants are all anxiously rushing about always in a great hurry, and many of them-Jefferson, for instance—have tirelessly it vented time-saving devices. Whether Ame icans are really always in a hurry, more in hurry than other busy industrialized peopl more, say, than the Germans or the Japanes is, of course, debatable. American trains an waiters have always been much slower tha European ones: American drivers surely d not go as fast as Italians. Where was and the fire? Perhaps pragmatic Americans con sider life with problems unacceptable. The believe that all problems not only must b solved but that they can be solved, and that in fact, the main purpose of a man's life the solution of problems, "If there was a prob lem [he thought], there had to be a solution He conveyed acute impatience and urgency. Arthur Schlesinger said of one American, Rol ert Kennedy, and he could have said the sam thing of most of his countrymen, including himself. If each problem has a solution, whi lose time, why not find it immediately, now today? All it takes, in most cases, is an asserr blage of eminent and talented specialists, sc entists, and professors from the right universities, with enough money and time-not to much time, of course-and the answer wi emerge.

HIS BELIEF has been proved right s often that it is almost ineradicable American feats, particularly in science have been spectacular, whenever team work and disciplined organization are essential, whenever data can be accurately gathered in sufficient quantity and measured, question formulated in mathematical formulas, and the percentage of probable errors accurately fore seen. (The number of American Nobel Prize winners in scientific fields is infinitely large than the number of those from the rest of the world.)

The most fulgid example of this, the acme of course, is the Americans' conquest of the moon. On the other hand, although American have been highly successful in the arts and in the first decades of their independence adept at handling intricate political and so cial problems, their disappointments have also been proportionately numerous, particularly in fields in which exact data cannot be gathered and figures manipulated. Many example could be quoted of American shortcomings it nonmeasurable fields—distorted opinion polls or wrong diagnoses of (Continued on page 83)

# INVISIBLE WARS

The Pentagon plays with poison

by Gene Lyons

Gas! GAS! Quick, boys!—An ecstasy of fumbling,

Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time, But someone still was yelling out and stumbling

And floundering like a man in fire or

Dim, through the misty panes and thick green light.

As under a green sea, I saw him drowning,

In all my dreams before my helpless sight He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

If in some smothering dreams you too

Behind the wagon that we flung him in, And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,

His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin; If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,

Bitter as the cud

Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,—

My friend, you would not tell with such high zest

To children ardent for some desperate glory,

The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est Pro patria mori.

-Wilfred Owen, "Dulce Et Decorum Est"

But when a Man's Fancy gets astride on his Reason: when Imagination is at Cuffs with the Senses; and common Understanding, as well as common Sense, is Kickt out of Doors; the first Proselyte he makes, is Himself; and when that is once compass'd, the Difficulty is not so great in bringing over others; A strong Delusion always operating from without, as vigorously as from

—Jonathan Swift, from "A Digression concerning the Original, the Use and Improvement, of Madness in a Commonwealth" in A Tale of A Tub

o what if almost everything serious the boys in the Pentagon have tried to bring off in the last twenty years seems to have been planned by Sergeant Bilko, Major Major Major (no doubt by now General Major Major), and the Wicked Witch of the West? The patriotic citizen is still inclined

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to leave real madness to the experts. Exterminating nations, after all, is an intimidating prospect; only the most advanced thinkers in the highest places are thought to qualify. My initial interest in the binary-nerve-gas question had been provincial and relatively superficial: after an ICBM silo fifty miles from your home blows up and tosses a ten-megaton H-homb into a wood because somebody dropped a wrench, you tend to notice when Congress decides to break an eleven-year moratorium on the manufacture of chemical-warfare munitions—a policy affirmed by three administrations and several Congresses-and wants to build the plant forty miles in the other direction.

I wasn't in a panic, mind you. They have been storing nerve gas at the Pine Bluff Arsenal for years. In fact, until President Niscon decided that biological warfare would be almost as dangerous to the offense as the defense and ordered stocks destroyed after negotiating a treaty with the Soviets in 1972, quantities of plague, anthrax, botulism, tularemia, and Venezuelan equine encephalitis were cultivated and stored there. Pine Bluff police had special instructions for handling arsenal employees who caught stray whiffs of the hallucinogen BZ on the production line and began seeing herds of carnivorous elephants where their children used to be.

For the most part, only interested parties, obsessive newspaper readers with good memories, and very serious national-security fans know that there is a binary-nerve-gas question, which is part of what finally attracted my attention.

One of the unspoken givens of public debate on doomsday issues is that the rest of us must be solemn when the United States Congress cannot trouble itself to be serious. So what if the September 1980 decision, almost ignored by the press because it occurred during the quadrennial dog-and-pony show held to select the leader of the Free World, was made without benefit of hearings, was intellectually justified by an article read into the record from Reader's Digest, and consumed less than three hours' debate in both houses? So what if the quality of that debate made it sound like a skit with Gene Wilder as Chicken Little and Richard Pryor as Henny Penny? No doubt the Russians got the message: "They bad, those Russians, but we badder. We real bad, and we be fixin' to get worse. Stand back, you Russians. Watch out! We be mean motherfuckers.' Of course nobody really knows what the Soviets make of messages like that, but that is their problem. They had gone pounding into Afghanistan-previously a synonym in this

country for the end of the earth—quite as it were Hungary or Czechoslovakia. Now the would have to pay the price in symbolic ge-

Once an issue is identified, as binary nerv gas was by its main proponent and the at thor of the *Reader's Digest* article, Rep. Rich ard Ichord (Dem.-Mo.), as crucial to "th survival of Western civilization," our cividuty is never to crack a smile. Did Frenchme smirk at the Maginot Line?

HE PROVINCIAL QUESTION that inter ested me was, why Arkansas? Did th decision to put the plant-to be the country's exclusive manufacturer of chemical munitions-in Pine Bluff augur sort of inverse pork-barrel approach to un pleasant necessities? Were small, politically insignificant states going to have to choke down what stronger constituencies had the power to resist? Both Arkansas senators, Dale Bumpers and David Prvor-neither a so-called knee-jerk liberal on defense questions-had voted for Gary Hart's amendment to delay funding for six months pending study and ful hearings. My congressman, Ed Bethune, a Reagan Republican and former FBI agent voted against binaries. The then governor, Bil Clinton, had said Arkansas did not want the plant. Of course the Pine Bluff Chamber of Commerce was gung ho, as was Beryl Anthony the local congressman, but the former body would back a preemptive strike to exterminate every Godless Atheistical Communist on earth. especially if it meant getting a federal payroll.

My suspicions were unjustified. The binary idea turns out to have had a long bureaucratic half-life within the Army Chemical Corps and dates almost unchanged from the mid-Fifties. when the late Sen. John McClellan was taking care of it and his district. The 155-mm howitzer shells the army plans to manufacture at Pine Bluff are, in terms of performance, theoretically identical to millions of nerve-gas shells it already possesses. "Binary" means simply that instead of containing a live agent, the new generation of weapons-not just artillery shells but bombs, missile warheads, rockets, land mines, and spray tanks-would contain two "nonlethal" chemical precursors that would become a deadly compound only after the weapon was fired. Proponents argue that binary weapons would be much safer to make, transport, and store than current U.S. weapons, because it would not be necessary to load both chemicals into the shells until just before firing. Presumably, too, they would prove more politically acceptable in Europe.



#### The Marx Brothers' apocalypse

EADERS INCLINED to doubt my characterization of the proceedings are referred to the Congressional Record. both House and Senate versions, for September 10 and 16, 1980, and for May 21. 1981. They should keep in mind that the last time Congress held hearings on the binary issue was 1975, at which time it not only refused to fund the scheme but passed a law. which is still binding, stipulating that the Defense Department may not manufacture new gas weapons until the president submits to Congress a written report certifying that they are needed for national security. Proponents of gas this time alternated invocations of the awesome Soviet might in chemicals with portentous warnings about the folly and futility of negotiating with communists at all. Such practical and factual objections as were raised by opponents-for the most part the same ones that prevailed in 1975—were brushed aside with mutterings about "unilateral disarmament.7

My own favorite moment came when Republican senator John Warner of Virginia rose to wonder darkly "who [in the Defense Department] is trying to stop the decision and why?" Reminded that the culprit was then secretary Harold Brown, Warner sat down.

Yet while proponents like Ichord and Jackson invoked binary nerve gas as the only thing that could prevent Bolshevik hordes from poisoning their way clear to the English Channel. they played shrewdly on the 1975 law to assure the dubious that Congress's decision was not critical at all. For a paltry \$3.15 million to build the plant and another \$20 million to equip it, the United States could be on line and ready to go by 1984 (the Department of Defense has projected total chemical warfare expenditures of between four and seven billion dollars). Since the Carter administration opposed the idea, there would be no nerve gas if the incumbent administration won the election; if Reagan won, it was his baby. Nobody in Congress would have to vote on the issue again.

When it came to the question the Carter administration, as was so often its wont, took a walk. It wished neither to be accused of wimphood on national defense nor to fight powerful forces within the Democratic ranks who might win. Candidate Reagan said nothing. Who wants to run on a pro-gas-warfare platform?

"The trouble with the whole thing," says Senator Pryor, a cautiously conservative politician who surprised many by making his antigas position into something of a personal crusade, "is that talking about nerve gas is like picking out your own coffin. Nobody wants to do it at all, and certainly not on the Senate floor." With the skids so artfully greased, it is a wonder Pryor and Sen. Gary Hart's amendment to delay the question and require hearings came as close as it did to passing. It failed 47–46. In the House, the vote was 276–125 in favor of binaries.

Because Sen. Mark Hatfield (Rep.-Ore.) killed the \$20 million part of the appropriation in joint committee by threatening to flibuster the entire Defense Department budget in his appropriations committee, the issue came up again last May. It went pretty much the same way, with binary quietly supported by the Reagan administration and winning narrowly in a much more conservative Senate by a margin of 50-48, despite the defection of conservatives like Pryor among the Democrats and Thad Cochran of Mississippi and Nancy Kassebaum of Kansas among the Republicans.

But if the congressional debate was often unintentionally comic, nerve gas itself is not. Next to nuclear bombs, nerve gas is as serious a weapon as the swarming imagination of man has conceived. Should a full-scale chemical slugfest break out between NATO and the Warsaw Pact countries, the dread scenario that all binary proponents invoke, only the mind of God could comprehend the slaughter that would ensue. Nerve gas kills everything with a nervous system that is not equipped with a protective suit and a gas mask: women, children, cats and dogs, rabbits in the fields, and birds in the trees. One good lungful or as little as a drop on exposed skin of the colorless, odorless, tasteless gas blocks the action of the enzyme acetylcholinesterase at the nerve endings. Every muscle in the body contracts and cannot relax: victims are said to be "stimulated to death." Outward symptoms are intense sweating, mucus clogging the bronchial passages, loss of vision, simultaneous and uncontrollable vomiting and defecation, convulsions, paralysis, and, finally, inability to breathe. The fortunate die in minutes; victims who get smaller lethal doses may linger for

"No doubt the Russians got the message: They bad, those Russians, but we badder."

If this stuff comes down, brothers and sisters, millions of European civilians, pets, farm animals, and adventitious earthworms will be stone dead and rotting on the ground. Since nerve gas is quite closely related to the organophosphorous family of insecticides, the flies that alight on their eyes could have contamination problems.

The military literature on the subject refers to such an eventuality as "collateral effects." The soldiers on both sides, you see, will be buttoned up tight in their masks and protective suits or zipping around in airtight tanks and armored personnel carriers executing bat-

tle plans.

Well, maybe not zipping, exactly. The point of shooting gas, assuming both armies are fully equipped defensively (gas is unique as a weapon of war in that near-total passive defense is theoretically possible), is to afflict your opponent with what Lt. Col. Charles H. Bay. writing in Parameters, the journal of the U.S. Army War College, calls "nightmare drag." Protective suits are hot, uncomfortable, and awkward. Both the heavy rubber Soviet models and the more dashing and lighter NATO suits, made of synthetic fibers impregnated with activated charcoal, inhibit communication (Russian gas masks, in fact, make no provision for enlisted men to speak, just officers). impede dexterity, and prohibit eating and excretion. The Russian gear can be worn for only a couple of hours-less than forty-five minutes at more than seventy degrees-before a soldier must remove to a gas-free area and have his suit and weapons decontaminated so he can disrobe before he passes out. Characteristically, perhaps, the NATO suits are disposable; after about six hours our boys will have to climb out and get another from the quartermaster. In a continually contaminated environment, combat maneuvers could come to resemble a ghastly game of musical chairs: the apocalypse played by the Marx Brothers.

But I was speaking of civilians, their kith. kin, and kine. Here is the same Lieutenant Colonel Bay on the subject: "collateral effects. if one is really concerned about them [my italics], may be minimized through the careful application of target-analysis procedures and definitive rules of engagement." Like almost all military enthusiasts of binary weapons, Bay is a career man in the Army Chemical Corps, a branch the Pentagon tried to abolish after Vietnam but which has always had powerful congressional supporters. His current command is the Tooele Army Depot in Utah, where 40 percent of America's existing stockpile of nerve-gas weapons is kept. (The rest is at Pine Bluff, Rocky Mountain Arsenal near Denver,

Ft. McClellan in Anniston, Alabama, Johnso Island in the Pacific, and various other locations.)

Tooele is not too far downwind from the army's Dugway Proving Ground, where, a readers may recall, 6,400-odd sheep perished in March 1968 when a badly designed aeria spray tank put twenty pounds of the nerve agent VX into the ambient breeze at a somewhal higher altitude than target-analysis procedure called for. For fourteen months afterward the army resolutely denied its responsibility The dead sheep had been grazing over a two hundred-square-mile area at an average dis tance of thirty miles from the target. Definitive rules of engagement, indeed. Statistically speaking, two hundred square miles of Wes Germany may be expected to contain about 128.394 citizens, although most would not presumably, be eating grass. No wonder no body else in NATO wants to have anything to do with nerve gas, whether binary or otherwise

HE MORE I succumbed to the dread fascination of nerve gas, the more I began to suspect that there were no experts on the subject—or at the very least none who hadn't a career stake in promoting the binary idea. Colonel Bay's article was not unique. Like the politicians who had echoed them in Congress, most writers on the subject simply ignored the substantive arguments of people who remained doubters; they suppressed evidence clearly within their ken and elevated speculation and a priori assumptions based on quite dubious political theology to the status of undeniable fact. Was it possible, I began to wonder, that the unthink-

able remains unthought?

I began compiling great lists of factual and inferential questions to ask, and essayed a visit to Washington, where, like a humble Gulliver in the Grand Academy of Lagado, I walked miles of corridors visiting the resident experts in their variously appointed cubicles, politely discussing the unspeakable in tones more reasonable than most men use to talk about baseball or the vagaries of women. By the end of a week I was more bewildered than when I had begun. My questions were multiplying, yet I found myself meeting the sublime and authoritative calm of persons who-although they couldn't answer my queriesnevertheless assured me that everything was under control. Without exception, every believer in the necessity of binary weapons whom I met was at pains to assure me that the Soviets intend to conquer the world by force, have nothing but cold-blooded contempt for our

sniveling pieties, and are exactly on schedule. If you are a patriot and a man, it is strongly implied, you must leave off asking and begin

believing.

When they are held so firmly, such views can be intimidating, if not to one's own opinions, then to the prospect of further conversation. Anybody who lives in Arkansas and who is not a religious fundamentalist learns the futility of arguing about faith. But I am a skeptic, so I went on to Baltimore, where I met with Saul Hormats, whose name I was given by a "nameless government official."

Hormats was for thirty-seven years an army employee, and before retiring in 1973 he had been at one time director of development at the arsenal in Edgewood, Maryland, In that capacity he oversaw the creation of the current generation of nerve-gas weapons, as well as of the gas masks and protective equipment now in use. He was at first reluctant to speak, but I said I was worn out with political theology and wanted to know, in the simplest way of putting it, whether nerve gas-its horrors aside-was still a useful weapon. Assuming it was, was a new generation of binary weapons needed or not? Was the 155-mm artillery shell planned for manufacture at Pine Bluff the weapon of choice? And, given positive answers to all of the above, would the weapons work? For readers who lack the patience for the detailed considerations that follow, the answers to my questions were, in order, no, no, no, and probably not, "What happened was that when you asked those questions about wind and weather. topography, and logistics," Hormats said, shortly after I'd come in the door, "the people you were talking to had not thought of them before, let alone of the answers, in terms of live firings. You can only go so far with computer simulants of the vagaries of weather, terrain, and target. We'd be fielding an untested weapon system. There is no hard military experience for these weapons."

In other words, the big development in nerve-gas warfare since we quit making the weapons in 1969 is the prospect of an openended defense budget. It has to be spent; the people who can figure out how are judged by

their rhetoric.

The most gruesome weapon

HE HISTORY OF chemical and biological warfare is long, but except in a metaphorical way has relatively little to offer students of nerve gas. Indian accounts describe the use of smoke screens and toxic fumes as much as four thousand years

ago; Thucydides tells of Spartans besieging Athens with the aid of sulfur dioxide clouds made by burning sulfur and pitch. Christians burned poisoned rags to ward off Turks during the Crusades, and poisoned weapons have been used around the world times out of mind. In North America, it is recalled that Lord Jeffrey Amherst, hero of song and fable, sold to Native Americans blankets infected with smallpox, thus weakening their resistance during the French and Indian War.

The modern era of chemical warfare, though, began at the Ypres salient on the Franco-Belgian border on April 22, 1915, when the Germans released 168 tons of chlorine gas from canisters simply opened in a light wind along four miles of British, French, and Canadian trenches. They achieved total surprise, allegedly killing 5,000 men immediately and generating as many as 20,000 casualties. "Try to imagine," wrote a later student of the subject, "the feelings and the condition of the French colonial troops as they saw the vast cloud of greenish-yellow gas spring out of the ground and slowly move downwind toward them, the vapour clinging to the earth, seeking out every hole and hollow and filling the trenches and shell holes as it came. First wonder, then fear; then, as the first fringes of the cloud enveloped them and left them choking and agonized in the fight for breath -panic. Those who could move broke and ran, trying, generally in vain, to outstrip the cloud which followed inexorably after them." So vivid and terrifying were the accounts written by journalists who visited the trenches not long after that news of the attack was printed in England almost uncensored—a rarity in the carnival of lies that passed for reporting during that war. Even if it conveyed news of a defeat, the anti-Hun propaganda was too good to resist. (German sources consulted by Frederic J. Brown in his excellent study Chemical Warfare: A Study in Restraints. however, claim that 5,000 deaths are many more than actually occurred.)

In any event, the use of gas proved indecisive. Apparently quite surprised by the effectiveness of chlorine against a totally bewildered and demoralized enemy, the Germans were unprepared to exploit their temporary advantage by pushing through the corpse-littered front for a breakthrough. What came to be called the Second Battle of Ypres ground on for another month, cost 100,000 total casualties to participants on both sides, but moved the front hardly at all. The memory of that first sneak attack, however, has colored civilized attitudes toward chemical warfare ever since.

"The use of gas in the First World War proved indecisive."



Military historians agree that the pattern first seen at Ypres continued throughout the war The Allies developed a crude gas mask and retaliated in kind six months later, with the prevailing westerly winds in their favor. A tactical seesaw tipped throughout the conflict, as protective equipment, experience, and training rendered troops relatively immune first to one gas weapon, then another, then vet another. The combatants used collectively between thirty-eight and fifty different toxic agents between 1915 and 1918, and delivered them through a variety of increasingly sophisticated weapons. By the end of the war, about half the German artillery shells were filled with mustard gas, by far the most effective of the agents at producing casualties because it burned the skin and persisted on contaminated surfaces for days. In fact, the highest incidence of burns among British soldiers was on the genitals and buttocks of those who relieved themselves on contaminated ground.

The overall effect, however, was stalemate. One important British history of the war relegates gas to a footnote: "Gas achieved but local success, nothing decisive; it made war uncomfortable, to no purpose," Of 25 million military casualties in that war just over 1.3 million came from gas, and only a small percentage of those were fatal. Civilian casualties seem to have been relatively few; due to the static nature of trench warfare, civilians were rarely close to the battlefield. Due to uncertainties of climate and delivery, gas was almost never used in the First World War on attacking troops, only to "soften" resistance before assaults on fixed positions. Of the military casualties, it is worth noting, about a third were Russian.

Yet regardless of its ultimate ineffectiveness as a weapon, gas came to stand in the public mind for all that was gruesome about World War I. "To the military," writes Frederic Brown, "it represented the encroachment of science which was corrupting the expertise and honor of their profession; to the civilian, it symbolized the ruthlessness and inhumanity of modern war." Never mind that the triumph of technology over chivalry and individual human courage in 1918 might more properly have been awarded to the machine gun-on the Russian front German commanders complained of stacks of bodies so high in front of their positions that gunners could no longer see. The machine gun had been around for some time, and was an extension of a weapon that was understood and accepted. Gas was insidious, sneaky; perhaps too, some have speculated, men have a primordial fear of suffocation that makes the prospect of breathing poisoned air more horrible than other ways of

A treaty to ban both chemical and submal rine warfare was negotiated at the Washing ton Conference on Limitation of Armaments in 1921-22, but the French balked at the submarine provisions and it never took effect. Ir 1925, however, the Geneva Conference for the Control of the International Trade in Armstoday the very title has an almost absurdly optimistic ring-accepted an American draft resolution on gases: "Whereas the use in war of asphyxiating poisonous or other gases, and of all analogous liquids, materials or devices. has been justly condemned by the general opinion of the civilized world ... prohibition shall be universally accepted as a part of International Law."

As treaties go, the Geneva Protocol is weak. It has no machinery for enforcement, provides no penalties for violations, does not apply to wars that involve nonsignatories, and has never banned the testing and manufacture of chemical weapons. Although just about all countries with a chemical-warfare capacity ratified the treaty shortly after it was written. many did so with the reservation that they agreed to renounce only first use and would retaliate in kind if attacked.\* Ironically, the United States, to its and Vietnam's later rue. did not itself ratify the treaty it wrote until 1975—it fell victim to a strong lobbying campaign by the Army Chemical Warfare Service and the chemical industry. Despite all those weaknesses, however, all the Geneva Protocol has ever done is work; no signatory has ever attacked another with gas.

ERHAPS, in the great cosmic account book, it will be written that the German attack at Ypres was a beneficence. Among the victims of gas warfare was one Corporal Adolf Hitler, who was temporarily blinded and conceived a hatred for gas warfare that he carried with him almost to the last bunker. In the end, Albert Speer says. Hitler ordered a suicide attack on the advancing Allied armies with the nerve-gas weapons German scientists had discovered during the war, but by then his dementia was apparent and the task too complicated to be carried out. The German high command, which had been as ill prepared for gas warfare as were the other belligerents in 1939, ignored



<sup>\*</sup> Countries signing the Geneva Protocol with no reservations, thereby renouncing even retaliatory use of gas, include NATO members: Norway, Denmark, West Germany, Greece, Iceland, Luxembourg, and Turkey.

him. Current proponents of a new generation of American nerve-gas weapons make much of mistaken German intelligence reports, which supposed that the United States, having discovered DDT, also knew how to make nerve gas. Richard Ichord's Reader's Digest article maintains that only the fear of retaliation in kind dissuaded the Nazis from using nerve gas, and other propagandists of the cause cite him when the subject is deterrence. The truth, of course, is far more complex, and the assumed American capacity seems to have had relatively little to do with it.

In fact, none of the belligerents in World War II was prepared for the offensive use of gas. The British issued 38 million civilian gas masks in 1937-38, but more as a means of arousing popular understanding of the German threat than from the real fear of gas attack. One reason Germany did not invade the south coast of England after Dunkirk, amazingly enough, is that it feared the British command might resort to mustard gas on the beachheads, and it was weakened by a shortage of gas masks for the horses used to haul munitions. The American refusal to take gas seriously seems to have been relatively typical: "Dislike of gas," writes Brown, who had access to the archives of the combatants, "was based upon more than instinctive fear or distrust. There was also the question of effectiveness. Many officers wondered if the costs of employing poison gas on the battlefield were not greater than the tactical rewards. Problems of operating in a toxic environment, unsolved at the end of World War I, were for the most part still unsolved in 1939.'

Among those problems were enormous logistical difficulties, since gas substitutes for no other weapon but adds huge complexities of its own: decontamination; the prospect of mass casualties, many of them civilian; and communications disruptions while wearing masks. Given the budget constraints of the era and the need for such basic weapons as rifles, tanks, trucks, and airplanes, chemical warfare was slighted. There was also general resentment within the armed services toward the insistent propaganda efforts of the Chemical Warfare Service.

In the end, Brown shows, numerous factors, among them the airplane's ability to take retaliation to an opponent's homeland—whether by gas or other means—exerted a moderating force:

Each nation assumed that tactical employment of chemical weapons would escalate to strategic counter-city exchange. And fears of strategic retaliation precluded serious consideration of tactical use....

Poison gas was a weapon too technologically demanding and psychologically disquieting to be assimilated by the military profession. It was an unacceptable anachronism, born too early out of a unique marriage of science and war.

Allegations of gas warfare have been relatively common in the years since the adoption of the Geneva Protocol. They are often made by obscure groups fighting larger powers and seeking outside support. Documented instances are much rarer. Mustard gas was used by the Italians in their glorious campaign in Ethiopia, by the Japanese against the Chinese between 1936 and 1943, and by the Egyptians against South Yemen tribesmen in the mid-1960s. To binary proponents, these instances are clear proof that nations that cannot retaliate with gas are invariably its victims. A bit of paring with Occam's razor, however, shows that what all the victims have had in common was an inability to retaliate at all.

Gas stratagems

IVEN THE POPULAR horror of gas. readers may be surprised at one traditional line taken by Chemical Corps stalwarts, According to Maj. Gen. H. L. Gilchrist, an early exponent, speaking just after World War I: "[Gas] is not only one of the most efficient agencies for effecting casualties, but it is the most humane method ever applied on the battlefield." Actually, there is some support for at least the second part of Gilchrist's apologia. Mustard gaswhich came into use quite late in the warproduced forty incapacitating casualties for every death. Which of us, indeed, would not prefer to languish in a hospital with embarrassing burns than to be dismembered by high explosives or stitched across the gut with .50caliber machine-gun bullets?

The invention of nerve agents, however, changed everything about gas warfare except the rhetoric of its proponents. Brig. Gen. J. H. Rothschild of the Chemical Corps puts the question another way in his 1964 treatise Tomorrow's Weapons. "Why is it," the general asks, "that we accept methods of war which will burn a man to death, or blast off his limbs or part of his face, and leave him blind or mindless, yet say that gas or biological warfare is unacceptable?...an excellent case can be made for toxics as the most humane weapons of all." Thomas Dashiell, the Pentagon's current staff specialist for chemical technology and overseer of binary weapons, takes a similar line. Writing in the house organ, Defense/81,

"Gas substitutes for no other weapon but adds huge complexities of its own."



Dashiell dismisses distaste for gas warfare as a product of misunderstanding. "A closer examination of casualty figures from World War I. where approximately seven percent of chemical casualties were fatal, belies the view that chemicals should be thought of as weapons of mass destruction." What Dashiell neglects to pass on to his brethren in arms (or behind desks. as the case may be), is that the nerve gases currently stockpiled by the United States are more poisonous than mustard gas to an almost exponential degree, VX, for example, the persistent nerve agent that killed the sheep at Dugway, has 2,000 times the toxicity of mustard gas when absorbed through the skin, and is almost 300 times more deadly when inhaled. One cannot begin a rational discussion of a nerve-gas conflict without knowing that.\*

But then Dashiell's specialty, as a subsequent journey to his cubicle made clear, is not rational discussions of fact. Here is his summary, in the same *Defense/81* article, of our national record on chemical questions: "The present United States...policy has been essentially unchanged through the course of history: we will not initiate chemical warfare using lethal or incapacitating chemicals, we will continue to seek an effective and verifiable

ban on production stockpiling and use of chemical weapons, but in the absence of such a ban we will maintain a chemical warfare capability to deter the use of chemicals agains U.S. or Allied forces..." Sounds appropriately firm, yet idealistic, does it not? Exactly as one would have an American policy, if fact. Unfortunately, however, the historical part is sheer nonsense.

Dashiell's first evasion is perhaps under standable from the bureaucratic point of view In order to make any sense at all on a con temporary battlefield in a war between tech nological equals, gas has to be seen as a tactical weapon. Not even in the bowels of the Pentagon are there many who think the United. States needs any weapon of mass destruction to compete with nuclear bombs, especially one that doesn't work when it's raining. The second whopper, though, cannot be explained as anything other than deliberate propaganda. Most officers now serving can be counted on not to have read the 1956 Army Field Manual, which pointed out that:

The United States is not party to any treaty now in force that prohibits or restricts the use in warfare of toxic or non-toxic gases, of smoke or incendiary mate-

\* Had it not been for allegations of Soviet use of nerve gas in Afghanistan, it is doubtful last year's appropriation would have passed in the Senate. Of that allegation the best that can be said is that it is highly dubious. No physical evidence has been produced and alleged evewitness accounts differ, State Department spokesman Matthew Nimetz told the House Foreign Affairs Committee that it was about a "fifty-fifty" proposition. Defense Secretary Brown spoke in Los Angeles of "mounting evidence that the Soviets are using incapacitating gas-and some that they may be using lethal gas," but said there was no hard evidence to prove either. Earlier, Edward M. Collins of the Defense Intelligence Agency told the House committee that "there is no confirmation at all that they have used chemical weapons." Bruce C. Clarke of the CIA, asked about the common perception based on rumor, replied: "I don't see anything wrong with letting that rumor

Saul Hormats has been following the allegations closely from the beginning. "I am one of the few people presently involved in the controversy who has been exposed to nerve gas," he says, "and have experienced an array of symptoms, I am absolutely certain that nerve gas has not been used by the Soviets in Afghanistan."

Just before this article went to press, moreover, the State Department presented what it called "significant, although preliminary" evidence of the presence of mycotoxins—organically produced poisons not indigenous to Southeast Asia—on one leaf-and-stem sample collected in Cambodia, near the Thai border. The release of this report followed by one day Secretary Alexander Haig's charge in a Berlin speech that the Soviets are guilty of chemical warfare, although the document itself makes it quite clear that the origins of the poisons are conjectural.

The Russians, of course, deny everything. Neither the names nor the titles of the people responsible for the report, in what The New York Times described as an "unusual move," were made public. To anybody familiar with the pattern of charges

To anybody familiar with the pattern of charges and countercharges in this smarmy business, just one obvious conclusion emerges: nobody seriously believes any longer that nerve gas has been employed by the Russians or their nasty pals, either in Afghanistan or in Southeast Asia. Whether that change of mind has more to do with the evidence or with the already assured funding of our own binary program cannot even be guessed at with the facts available.

Should these latest charges prove to be anything more than propaganda, the Russians will have been not only inhumane and duplicitous but also very dumb. Organically produced toxins are covered in the 1975 biological-warfare treaty. To have produced them as weapons of war, or to have supplied them for such use, much less to have actually used them, would be a direct violation of that treaty and would no doubt result in the cessation of all serious arms negotiations for some time to come.

The most cogent comment on the subject was made last year by Harvard biochemist Matthew Meselson, perhaps the leading academic expert in this country on chemical warfare, in testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee. He was speaking of the Afghan charges: "What we have ... is the worst of both worlds. If the unconfirmed allegations of the use of poison gas are false, continued doubt serves only to erode the existing restraints against chemical warfare and to undermine the basis for effective arms control. If the allegations are true, our inability to document them prevents us from having much impact on the actual course of events."

rials or of bacteriological warfare....

The Geneva Protocol . . . has been ratified or adhered to and is now effective between a considerable number of states. However, the United States Senate has refrained from giving its advice and consent to the ratification of the protocol by the United States and it is accordingly not binding on this country.

Veither are they likely to have plumbed the lepths of the Congressional Record in 1959, vhen Rep. Robert Kastenmeier of Wisconsin ntroduced a joint House-Senate resolution reterating the national policy to be one of no irst use, as Dashiell describes it, which had ast been stated by President Roosevelt. Kasenmeier was responding to "Operation Blue ikies," an intensive propaganda and publicelations drive then being conducted by the Army Chemical Corps on behalf of chemical and bacteriological war. The Defense Departnent opposed the resolution in a letter dated March 29, 1960. Such declarations, the DoD reld, "might apply with equal pertinency across the entire spectrum and no reason is conceived why biological and chemical weapons should be singled out for this distinction." The State Department tendered its opposition to a policy of no first use two weeks later, as follows:

We must recognize our responsibility to our own and the Free World's security. These responsibilities involve, amongst other things, the maintenance of an adequate defense posture across the entire weapons spectrum which will allow us to defend against acts of aggression in such manner as the President may direct. Accordingly, the Department believes that the resolution should not be adopted.

The resolution failed, and in November of that year the State Department made it official: "The President thus remains free to determine American policy on the use of such weapons in any future war." There is no use opening a chicken-and-egg inquiry into who is responsible for what part of the arms race, but it bears mentioning that the Soviet Union's great interest in the defensive aspects of chemical war, which it makes no effort to conceal, began just about the same time the Chemical Corps budget began to grow.

UT IF THEY ARE unaware of the ancient history of American policy, most of Dashiell's readers ought to remember Vietnam. As it is now unfashionable to dwell upon the particulars of that conflict, I shall pass over them quickly. Suffice it to say that without presidential knowledge or "The nerve gases approval the United States and South Vietnam secretly initiated the use of three gases early in the war. These were the tear gases CS, the less powerful CN, and an agent called DM, or Adamsite. Although it was used far less than the other two, DM may be lethal under certain conditions, particularly to the very old or young, and was listed under military regulations as not for use "where deaths are not acceptable."\* When the newspapers first printed stories about gas use in March 1965, Secretary of State Dean Rusk said, "We are not embarking on gas warfare in Vietnam." It was his understanding that nonlethal agents were to be used only for riot control, in order to avoid "artillery or aerial bombs that would inflict great damage upon innocent people." The national and international outcry, however, was sufficiently great to cause the use of gas to be suspended for a time.

It was not a very long time. By October of the same year Gen. William Westmoreland had received permission to use tear gas "when it will save lives," and for the next few years Vietnam became a Chemical Corps playground. All manner of ingenious devices were employed to protect the innocent, from "Mighty Mite" blowers to force gas into tunnels and bunkers, to helicopter drops of large quantities of gas just before B-52 bombing runs. At the same time, some with especially long memories may recall, the United States declared war on Vietnam's plant life, guilty of both sheltering and feeding communist Vietcong. Millions of acres of forests and croplands were defoliated with the herbicides 2. 4D and 2, 4, 5T or "Agent Orange," which came advertised as harmless to all but politically unsound trees and rice paddies. It was called Operation Ranch Hand; its slogan, according to Seymour Hersh in the New York Review of Books, was "Only We Can Prevent Forests.

On August 19, 1969, President Nixon sent the Geneva Protocol to the Senate for ratification, having renounced bacteriological-warfare weapons, an act of "unilateral disarmament" for which he has perhaps received insufficient credit. At the same time he sent along a letter from Secretary of State Rogers reserving currently stockpiled by the United States are more poisonous than mustard gas to an almost exponential degree."



<sup>\*</sup> DM reacts with water to form arsenical compounds that can be fatal. Very likely it, or something like it, accounts for the persistent reports of nerve-gas use by the Vietnamese against Hmong tribesmen in Laos. People familiar with nerve-gas symptoms say they are not among those reported by refugees, but that the drinking of water after an attack of DM could account for them. By the end of the war North Vietnamese troops had the capacity to use gas and did use it.

the right to retaliate in kind if attacked with lethal gas weapons and claiming that "the Protocol... does not prohibit the use in war of riot-control agents and chemical herbicides. Smoke, flame and napalm are also not covered." Some months later, after the completion of hearings, Sen. J. W. Fulbright, chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, wrote the president to ask for reconsideration:

We note that the use of herbicides in Vietnam is now being discontinued. It would appear that their actual utility in Vietnam has been marginal and that the crop destruction program may well have been counterproductive....

Testimony on the question of tear gas... presented the following conclusions:

1. The military value of riot gas is very low.

 Our overriding security interest in the area of chemical and biological weapons is to prevent the proliferation and use of biological and lethal chemical weapons.

3. Our use of riot gas in war runs directly counter to this fundamental interest.

Taking note of an 80–3 vote in the U.N. General Assembly to the effect that riot gas and herbicides were prohibited by the Protocol—only Australia and Portugal voted with the United States, while most allies abstained on legalistic grounds—Fulbright went on to suggest that "the military cost of giving up tear gas and herbicides [appears] relatively low and that the 'United States position could therefore properly be dominated by 'decent respect for the opinions of mankind'" and the Protocol ratified without reservation. The Nixon administration never replied.

In December 1974, however, the Ford administration dropped the reservation after Defense Department studies concluded that the chemical operations in Vietnam had indeed been useless. The Senate quickly ratified the Protocol by ninety votes to none, and President Ford signed it in January 1975, almost exactly fifty years after Americans had written it. United States policy had once again become what Thomas Dashiell assures his readers it has been all along. Coupled with an announcement early in 1974 by Nixon and Brezhnev to the effect that the United States and the Soviet Union would open joint talks aimed at producing a total chemical-weapons ban, this was bad news indeed for the Army Chemical Corps. Having failed to deliver on its extravagant promises in Indochina, the Corps was once more stigmatized in the words of one high-ranking officer, "as a legion of the damned," a low-prestige outfit in which one

might bury a promising career. The prospect of a treaty, moreover, threatened extinction Nothing would do but a massive Soviet threat.

Toxic scenarios

NEWCOMER to the world of nerve-gas scholarship cannot but notice that it is exactly that: academic, even pedantic. Since nerve gas has never been used in combat, the literature on the subject is necessarily theoretical. As in art criticism and the garment trade, fashions change. When General Rothschild wrote his book in 1964, the memory of mounds of Chinese corpses before American machine guns in Korea was fresh, and the presumed enemy was the communist hordes of all Asia. Accordingly, and quite accurately, Rothschild stressed that:

Toxic agents are area weapons. Both chemical and biological agents, when released into the air in finely dispersed form, will travel for long distances on the wind. Chemical agents will cover only tens of square miles, possibly a hundred square miles, in a single attack, but biological agents can blanket hundreds of thousands of square miles.

Toxic agents are search weapons. When released into the air, they move with the wind, and, as they move, they penetrate shelters, buildings, dugouts and other types of fortifications, seeking enemy personnel...

Protection from toxic agents is difficult. A properly devised attack either can release the agent sufficiently far upwind from the target, or even place the attack directly on the target, so that little warning that an attack is in progress will be given to the target population. When odorless, colorless agents... are used, target personnel either will have a difficult time knowing, or will not know, when to mask or take other protective measures.

But since Nixon and Henry Kissinger have played the China card, the going thing is now European war. Scenarios have accordingly grown more precise, like Colonel Bay's. Rothschild's cruder formulations, accurate though they may be, have simply disappeared down a memory hole.

What is most striking about the contemporary pedantry—and it is worthwhile emphasizing that Rothschild and more recent theoreticians are talking about exactly the same weapons—is the almost absurd bloodlessness of the genre, as if the Third World War, should it come, will be fought according to the rules of Risk. Except as sentimental icons

hat need protection from the enemy, whose notives are so diabolical as neither to require for to admit of rational analysis, civilians do not exist. Such contingencies as rain, wind, sills and valleys, temperature inversions, panc, mutiny, shells that don't fire at all or that nisfire, truckloads of new protective suits stuck in the mud or delivered to a company hat needed masks-all highly likely to screw in the plans of anybody using nerve gas as a veapon of war-are not permitted to intrude mon the elegance of the scenario. Amoretta Toeber, cited by all proponents of binary weapons as the expert on the subject, sits coolv in her securely locked office at Systems Planning Corporation, just upriver from the Pentagon, and says that hostility to gas warare is an irrational dread that dates from 'the Middle Ages and the view of chemistry is witchcraft.

It is a "morality bias," according to her, which conditions American and European ttitudes, a bias the Soviets do not share. Teelings such as rage, terror, racial hatred, he desire for revenge of NATO allies should he Russians initiate gas warfare, and the enmy's consequent need to fear nuclear retalation, seem to Hoeber topics not worth considering. War-game scenarios, one is told, rule out a tactical nuclear response. People who hink otherwise, she chides, are guilty of "lowering the nuclear threshold"; ironically, when she is not plumping for binaries, Hoeber writes articles on winning nuclear wars in Eu-:ope. "In a European war," she says, with great firmness, "civilians are going to get killed 10 matter what you use. Chemicals will make t worse, but probably no worse than nuclear." In any event, she insists, the West is so far behind the Soviets in nuclear weaponry as to be practically defenseless.

HERE IS NO question that the Soviets have a chemical-warfare capacity, and probably a significant one. Just how great it is, how willing and likely the Russians are to use it in Europe, and whether the United States should replace its own quite formidable capacity with a new generation of binary weapons, are what the fight is about. At almost every turn, though, a humble petitioner seeking straight answers from proponents of the weapon encounters evasion.

How large is the Soviet offensive capacity? "You run very quickly into classified material on that," says Pentagon spokesman Maj. Lee DeLorm. "It's not like counting missile silos. But I can describe it adjectivally as 'vast.'" In her study The Chemistry of Defeat: Asym-

metries in U.S. and Soviet Chemical Warfare Postures, Amoretta Hoeber quotes "press reports" that claim the Russians stockpile as much as 700,000 tons of gas. Although she admits the evidence for that quantity is "not conclusive," it is the only number she uses in her summary argument, and it was widely touted on the Senate floor. If that figure had even the remotest possibility of being accurate, "vast" would be an understatement. Our own current 155-mm artillery shells weigh 100 pounds each and contain six pounds of live nerve agent. Using a conservative ten-toone ratio of hardware to gas, that would place the total amount of Soviet chemical munitions at seven million tons-roughly fourteen times as much as all the stockpiled munitions NATO has in Europe.

The current American supply of nerve-gas artillery weapons, we are told, totals roughly 150,000 tons, which works out to about three million projectiles. That is enough, according to Rep. Clement Zablocki, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, to allow fifty divisions to wage chemical warfare for one hundred days, by which time, of course, very few animate creatures in Europe would be left to fight over. In his brief appearance before the Senate Armed Services Committee last year, Defense Secretary Brown warned that little credence should be given to numerical estimates of Russian weapons. Face to face. Hoeber concedes that the 700.000-ton figure assumes that every Soviet plant capable of producing organophosphorous poisons has made nothing but nerve gas day and night for

"I don't believe there's hard evidence to support any number," she says. "The intelligence community hasn't looked for it. In the whole Western intelligence community there are probably no more than ten people whose specialty is chemical warfare." Translation: nobody has the foggiest idea what the Soviet capacity is because nobody outside the world of True Believers really thinks it matters.

There is no evidence that the Soviets have made any new munitions since treaty talks began with the United States in 1976, although Hoeber cites Alexander Haig, in an old interview in Stars and Stripes, as saying that they have. Nobody says they are making or contemplating binary weapons, because nobody seems to know if they can.

Proponents tend to play fast and loose with troop numbers as well. On the floor of the Senate, Senator Jackson spoke of 80,000 chemical troops, giving the Russians a forty-to-one advantage over the United States. Hoeber says there are 70,000–80,000 men under the com-

"There is no question that the Soviets have a chemicalwarfare capacity."

mand of one General V. K. Pikalov, a gentleman so ferocious of mien that binary sales teams sent out from the Pentagon to deal with dubious senators have been handing out 8 x 10 glossies of him as part of their pitch. Where these figures come from is a mystery. An unclassified 1980 report from the Defense Intelligence Agency lists the Soviet numbers at 50,000, and makes clear something for which one has to search in the fine print in the contributions of proponents: all 50.000 are trained entirely for defensive purposes and are not combat troops at all. Their tasks are detection. decontamination, and evacuation of casualties. nuclear and biological, it should be emphasized, as well as chemical.

Moreover, the Defense Intelligence Agency report makes clear, the Soviets have been organized in exactly this manner since World War II, and are said to believe that their defensive readiness and offensive capacity influenced Hitler not to attack them with gas. Much is made of the collective-protection apparatus found on Soviet tanks and armored personnel carriers captured by the Israelis during the 1973 war, but the drum beating has more to do with the Chemical Corps dilemma during that period than with anything new those systems represent. Among other drawbacks, the systems don't work very well -to protect riders inside an armored vehicle from nerve gas would require a virtually hermetic seal-and soldiers riding inside cannot get out and reenter without contaminating the interior.

In testimony at previous congressional hearings, Defense Department spokesmen, by their refusal even to consider collective-protection systems, all but admitted that the Russian ones are less an advantage than an effort to make up for the awful quality of their cumbersome suits and masks. Rather than organize as a separate branch, as the Soviets do, the American approach is to have fifteen soldiers, in each company of 100–130 troops, who have among their duties chemical and nuclear defensive responsibility. How many offensive chemical soldiers, do the Soviets have? If anybody knows, nobody is telling.

Almost all the other evidence marshaled by advocates of binary systems to establish the Soviet threat is purely rhetorical. One cannot read very far into the literature, for example, before coming, on the 1977 congressional testimony of Lieutenant General Cooksey, then deputy chief of staff for research, development, and acquisition, U.S. Army:

Chemical warfare would almost certainly be employed by the Soviets in the event of a tactical nuclear war in Europe, because if a strategic exchange did not result from tactical use of nuclear weapons it would obviously not be provoked by chemicals. The more important question is whether chemicals would be employed by the Soviets in a non-nuclear attack. The answer is quite probably yes. The Soviets are so immersed in chemical weaponry, tactics, doctrine, equipment and personnel, and so much of their training centers around the use of lethal agents that it would be odd, from a military standpoint, if they did not employ them....

Chemical warfare, to the Soviet leadership, is just another means of winning. This form of warfare holds for them none of the disgust and fear with which it is justly

regarded in the West.

The general's authority for this opinion, course, is himself. Hoeber goes so far as t introduce a translated Soviet document that she says proves the point. According to on Col. A. Steblinin. no doubt the Slavic courterpart of Colonel Bay:

Chemical weapons—toxic chemical agents (TCA) and the technical equipment used to deliver them in combat—can be used in modern wars. Their use, for example, has been officially sanctioned by the U.S. Command in Southeast Asia.

How's that again? That is all of it. Does is say gas can be used, will be used by the United States (the Defense Intelligence Agency report on Soviet defensive capacity says they be lieve their enemies might use toxic weapon despite the Geneva Protocol), or what? Without context and an annotated translation, fail to see how it means anything at all. For Hoeber, though, it is the clinching bit of evidence

Or consider the following Hoeberism, in troduced by way of accounting for military doubts about gas:

The problem of skepticism about utility again has exacerbated the U.S. rejection of chemical warfare because of the U.S. propensity to mirror image; because much of the relevant U.S. community does not believe CW weapons have military utility, the Soviets are viewed as rejecting an effective role for such weapons. Thus, according to this rationale, attention need not be paid to either offense or defense preparedness.

If nerve gas has no military usefulness, of course, a mistaken Soviet notion that it does is of no consequence as far as the United States offensive capacity is concerned. Defense against gas, which we shall look at in a moment, has nothing whatever to do with the decision on binary munitions.



O WHAT HAVE Pentagon officials been doing in the last ten years in between parading up to Capitol Hill to look authoritative for the cameras, and warnof the Soviet determination to reunify ast and West Germany through chemical asault? Very little. "A massive non sequitur" the way one Senate staffer describes the rmy's refusal to take seriously the conseuences of its own rhetoric. While constantly alling for a very expensive binary-munitions rogram the army has done next to nothing equip soldiers with adequate defensive gear r train them in its use. In 1979, for example, he army cut its already meager budget for rotective suits by one third in order to spend he money elsewhere. Hoeber says she thinks longress would have appropriated more mony for defensive equipment if the Pentagon ad asked for it, but that "they're too busy ushing paper over there to get it done. Adocating CW is not the way to get your next tar. It is unpopular and not considered the vav to get ahead."

But the enthusiasm of Brig. Gen. Gerald G. Vatson, commander of the Army Chemical Varfare School at Fort McClellan, Alabama, hould not be lightly dismissed. In the midst f a recent interview with the Birmingham Vews in which he touted the "humanitarian" ronders of binary nerve gas, Watson revealed hat he has requested permission to use real oison gas in training soldiers to protect themelves against chemical warfare. Current trainng using smoke and tear gas, he says, is not ealistic enough. The general may have somehing there. Last year an ABC film crew, aping a "20/20" segment on gas-warfare trainng of American troops in West Germany, ratched an unexpected temperature inversion end a cloud of tear gas back through the baracks, forcing a hasty evacuation, and then hrough a nearby village, where several inabitants had to be hospitalized afterward. lad it been nerve gas, the Germans might ake gas more seriously than they do. Inreased realism should do wonders for enlist-

Then there is the matter of decontaminaion. Much has been made of the elaborate ioviet decontamination equipment—although he pictures in the DIA report show that their raunted lead in this area consists of tank rucks with hoses that could just as well be used for mosquito control, and the TMS-65, m obsolete jet engine bolted to a truck frame hat blasts equipment with hot exhaust and decontaminating solution. Although some obervers doubt that the TMS-65 can actually do he job, in theory a tank can be decontaminated by such means in less than one minute.

The American plan is rather more involved, as the following colloquy between Rep. Larry McDonald and Gen. Frederick Kroesen, then commander in chief of the U.S. Army in Europe, makes clear. Senator Pryor dug it out of the Congressional Record and read it on the Senate floor during the 1980 debate:

Mr. McDonald: Do you have any rapid washing process, or do [you do] the decontamination process out in the field?

General Kroesen: The manner we are pursuing it right now in Europe, sir, is to have identified for unit commanders the locations of all available washing facilities, such as Schnellwasch stations, automobile drive-in washing facilities.

Should tank commanders run short of change, another congressional staff member describes what he saw on a visit to Fort Hood, Texas: "a half-million-dollar tank, and our decontamination equipment was a guy in heavy boots with a bucket and a goddam \$1.49 K-Mart mop, swabbing it down. And they were proud of it!"

The legislative history of the binary idea makes it quite clear that such gestures toward an improved defense posture—and everybody on all sides of the binary issue agrees that a sound defensive posture is essential—have come about mainly through congressional prodding. "No one explains how a defensively inferior force can counter a defensively superior force simply by retaliating in kind," Democratic Rep. Donald Fraser of Minnesota told binary proponents as long ago as 1974. As yet no one has, and until now the new munitions have been held hostage to improved defense.

But the army isn't ready to use nerve gas offensively either, and except for allowing the Chemical Corps to publish manuals now and again, doesn't seem to be getting ready. All but a very small amount, stored on American bases in West Germany, lies in remote spots in this country, where it is alleged by proponents of the new system to be deteriorating rapidly and growing obsolete. According to a GAO report made in 1977, however, "little has been done to maintain the stockpile in a serviceable condition or to restore the unserviceable portions." Whole lots, the GAO says, have been declared useless because of minor container rust and similar cosmetic defects. "Using anticipated approval of the binary program as a reason for not maintaining the stockpile is inconsistent with sound management," the report concludes. Offensive gaswarfare training is not now and has never been on the curriculum at the Army War College.

"The army isn't ready to use nerve gas offensively."



In sum, concluded a team from the Stanford Research Institute under contract from the Defense Department in 1977, while

there are statements in testimony, in field manuals, in CW studies and in war games which purport to show that CW has a high utility and that it could be a decisive factor in future battles...the long-standing low state of both defensive and offensive CW capabilities in US forces belies that conclusion. The low priority assigned to CW would be inexplicable if that were true.

Even so, the researchers concluded that the Pentagon had better get on the stick defensively and continue, out of prudence, to maintain a deterrent capacity.

I can see only four possible conclusions a skeptical citizen might draw from such a pat-

tern of hysterical inaction:

1. The army is, collectively speaking, as dumb as a brontosaurus in a snowstorm;

2. The people in charge know or suspect that binary nuts within the Chemical Corps and its attendant civilian claque are making wild overstatements both of the Soviet threat and NATO unpreparedness, but keep mum out of the bureaucrat's instinctive inclination for mutual back-scratching:

3. Binary weapons are neither desired nor intended for Europe at all, but are recognized as having antiguerrilla possibilities that will kindle a spark of hope in such military dictators and beleaguered oligarchs in the third world as may attract the support of the United

States:

4. All of the above.

The Russians' last resort

ERE IS THE VERY worst thing that could happen," Saul Hormats told me over an omelette in his Baltimore apartment. "Let us suppose that the Russians are determined and unprincipled monsters. Their first move would be to put all their forces on full gas alert. Then launch an attack against a surprised Allied force. All hell would break loose. All historic precedents show that surprise attack would be devastating to us. There would be a very large number of casualties, widespread panic, in a word: chaos. We would be facing a complete military disaster.

"But counterattack in kind," he continued,
"won't work. The wonderful attribute of chemical warfare—that's a hell of a word, wonderful—is that it's always more effective against old people and children than adults. And it is almost useless, militarily speaking, against an enemy who is prepared. Retaliation in kind

would be a symbolic gesture that would huse only our Allies' civilian population. You don't respond to a horror like a nerve-gas attac with a symbolic gesture. Once they use chemicals, the war isn't a game-room exercise. Scenarios aren't worth a damn. If they use gas it's for real."

But the time for gas, Hormats thinks, i over, like the time for crossbows and catapults "Maybe," he says, "the Soviets are monsters" But I don't think they are fools. If there wer a war in Europe and they were winning, while should they do it? The risks are incalculable unthinkable; they would be risking the sur vival of their civilization-and for what? The wouldn't be out to poison all the French and German people, they would be out to win Gas isn't going to be a deterrent or a deter mining factor in the war that would follow chemical attack. The Russians, or anybod else, would go to it only as a desperate las resort, and then only if they are convinced we'll respond only in kind. I concur with Realgan and Haig one hundred percent. If we mus go, we must go for real. If there is going to be a next war. I want us to win it.

"I have a 'morality bias' that says it's im moral to respond to a devastating Soviet at tack with a symbolic weapon. What use is a weapon that will kill all the old people and

leave the Russian soldiers alive?

"Going ahead with binaries," Hormats con tinues, "sends a completely wrong signal to the Soviets, one that Reagan doesn't want to send, and that is that we're not serious. Four five, or seven billion dollars that will be wasted are trivial compared with that."

Even if he is wrong, Hormats contends that the Chemical Corps is vastly overstating its problems with the current weapons. There are some, like the "weteye" series of bombsmany of which have been stockpiled, believe it or not, in the Rocky Mountain Arsenal, located in the suburbs of Denver and in the flight path of the city's commercial airport for many years, despite howls of protest-that probably ought to be destroyed. But the "bigeye" binaries that the Chemical Corps wants to replace the "weteyes" with have been on the drawing board for fifteen years and are not close to being ready for production. The artillery shells the Corps wants to make are not really capable of becoming obsolete as long as they are maintained at all, and the effective life of the nerve-agent loads can be extended for at least twenty years by the addition of a stabilizer, if easy tests show that is necessary.

Even so, Hormats maintains, the tactical claims being made for gas weapons are ludicrous. At best, "gas is a weapon of hope. This tuff about micrometeorology is cant. It doesn't work. The uncertainties of gas artillery fire are at least an order of magnitude greater than with any other weapons system. lucing a paper napkin, he sketched out an enemy defensive position, then surrounded it with dots representing nerve-gas shells, "The mly way to make sure you've covered them is to surround the targeted area with gas and 10pe you've achieved surprise, which, in realiatory attack, of course you haven't." With standard high explosives, especially the fragnentation cluster bombs now available, far nore predictable results are possible. He agrees that the tables produced in Scientific American last year by Harvard biochemist and chemical-warfare expert Matthew Meselson and English expert Julian Perry Robinson are accurate, and perhaps even conservative. The ables show that to cause 30 percent casualies among a platoon wearing gas masks but not defensive clothing, more than 1,300 155mm GB shells would be required. At one hunired pounds each, that would come to sixtyfive tons' worth of shells. Since the same figares apply on both sides, it is clear why defense is so important. The gas cloud produced from such an assault-even more would be required under less favorable weather conditions-might drift as far as sixty miles in whatever direction the wind took it.

That much was a confirmation of my own suspicions. But what really took my breath away was Hormats's assertion that binary artillery shells might not, and probably would not, work. The existing nerve-gas shells, he says, were merely an adaptation of already existing munitions. Even so, it took a great deal of testing and tinkering to get it right. In the Fifties, literally thousands of test rounds were fired at the Dugway facility in Utah. "You can have a gas cloud that burns up, if the reaction is too hot or forms too high off the ground and dissipates. Having a poison isn't the same thing as having a weapon. If it's more than six feet off the ground, it's no good. Or it might not form at all.

"And the binary rounds are not a simple change from other rounds. There's a whole new design involved. You need engineering data on cloud size and shape, rate of formation, vield, droplet-size distribution, persistency, etc. You need static and dynamic tests in statistically significant numbers. Simulants and computer models won't do. These would have to be live tests. You just have to keep testing and testing until you get it right. How many out of 1,000 rounds are going to be duds, and what happens to the gas when you get one? How much is agent, how much waste? If you don't do all that, you're going at it "So there you blind with World War III hanging in the balance. Where in the world are you going to do it? My God, the governor of Utah would send in the National Guard."

So there you have it, Armageddon fans, the ultimate cold-war weapon: billions of dollars and whole hurricanes of political and bureaucratic huffing and puffing for an outmoded form of mass murder that isn't needed and probably won't work. Of course, Thomas Dashiell, while admitting that the 155-mm shells are not needed as badly as he says bombs are -"there are other systems in R&D, it's more of a circumstance than a well-thought-out thing"-maintains that simulant testing will work, and proved it with a stream of jargon and acronyms I was not quick enough to write

Amoretta Hoeber remains consistent: "I would argue that there is no reason why they shouldn't be test-fired, at least a couple of rounds. If it doesn't work, we'd have a problem." Pentagon public-affairs spokesman Maj. Lee DeLorm, who serves as an artillery officer when not guiding inquisitive reporters through the labyrinth, did the best performance as Good Soldier, though, when I put the question to him: "You've got to have confidence. People who don't understand the technology have a hard time. I didn't have a lot of confidence in my wife's microwave oven, either, until she used it."

#### A gesture for sanity

NE CAN GET giddy contemplating a doomsday weapon that seems, in the final analysis, almost a joke; but in truth, the whole binary debacle seems to me absolutely symptomatic of the prevailing confusion in America about what we are up to in terms of "national security." Congress is prepared to go to the rhetorical wall and spend billions of dollars in order to protect Europe from the Russians, by manufacturing a weapon no European country will allow us to store on its soil. (The French, alone in Europe as always, are said to have a chemical capacity of their own.) The German position is particularly firm. In a 1970 white paper the West German government said:

In 1954, the Federal Republic of Germany renounced the production of biological and chemical weapons. She does not carry out any research or development conducive to the production of such weapons. The Federal Republic neither possesses nor does she store any biological or chemical have it. Armageddon fans, the ultimate cold-war weapon."

weapons; she does not seek possession of, or control over, weapons of that kind, she has made no preparations for using them, does not train military personnel for that purpose, and will abstain from doing so in the future. Any allegations to the contrary, as occasionally made to the public, are false.

That position remains as stated. The European objections, moreover, are more than moral and have little to do with fear of peacetime accidents. What they fear, as well they might, is that they may become a backdrop for the feverish scenarios cooked up by half-baked ideologues with a career interest in eschatological daydreams. This is not to impute all wisdom to the worldly Europeans and wicked innocence to the brute Americans. It is simply to observe, with Dr. Johnson, how wonderfully the prospect of hanging tends to concentrate the mind. Were it a question of defending Atlantic City or Long Beach, nerve gas would

have been out the window long ago.

For exactly that reason, the Soviets, with their long history of fighting wars on their own soil, have a clear self-interest in negotiating a chemical-warfare treaty; only the preposterous inversion of the actual world order that obtains in this country whenever an issue like nerve gas is bruited about could obscure something so obvious, or, rather, make even the firmest patriots and anticommunists nervous lest they seem "soft." Nobody is supposed to notice that the Soviets are surrounded by powerful enemies who can march into their territory on foot, while the greatest economic and military machine on earth has a hemisphere all to itself (with the exception of one small island). In order to maintain one's manly posture in the world, one has paradoxically to abandon everything one has learned as an adult and evaluate the Bad Guys through the eves of a child. The Russians not only represent the quintessence of evil-and the very pressures I am speaking of here make me hasten to say that I think the Soviet government perfectly capable of using nerve gas, if it could do so with impunity-but they know that they are Bad and we are Good. Our government, of course, would never think of such a thing, Good Guys don't attack Bad Guys just for being Bad. They wait until the Bad Guys do something really mean, and even then they always fight fair. And why not Don't the Good Guys always win?

I do not wish to be inflammatory or to call up old and buried controversies, particularl not ones interred since 1945. But so extrem is the national self-preoccupation that it re quires from most of us a serious effort of the imagination to conceive that the world doe not see us as Senator Jackson does. The bilateral talks between the United States and Russia on the subject of nerve-gas weapon have been in progress since 1976. The same binary proponents who use the Afghan allega tions to confirm their suspicion that the Sol viets plan to use nerve gas in Europe also say that their participation constitutes a cynical ruse designed to bull the West into unpreparedness. For both statements to be true would require extraordinary stupidity on the Soviets' part: they can squat on Afghanistan

indefinitely without resorting to gas.

Both nations have agreed in detail to the kinds of chemicals that would be bannedit is a complex matter, since many have nonmilitary uses. For quite some time the tough nut has been verification; how each will know the other isn't cheating. At last year's session, the Soviets agreed, at least in principle, to the idea of on-site inspection, which is a very hard one for them, sneaky, secretive buggers that they are. There is a considerable distance vet to go, but many reasons -among them the great dangers and manifest uncertainties of anybody's starting to shoot nerve gas around-to think that an acceptable treaty can be negotiated. If President Reagan really wants to show how Good, and in Richard Pryor's sense, how very Bad, we are, he will sit on the report he has to submit to Congress before binary weapons can be made, and will indicate to the Russians that the United States wants a treaty. If the two nations cannot agree to get rid of nerve gas, with all its dangers and absurdities, he might well say, there is no point in bothering to try for nuclear arms reductions. He can make a gesture in the direction of sanity for exactly the same reasons Richard Nixon could recognize China and ditch biological war. Nobody on earth would be mad at him except the Army Chemical Corps.

HARPER'S DECEMBER 1981

# Some insist coal is good. Some insist coal is bad.

We insist it's not that lack or white.

Those who insist that coal is good point ut that we have over 200 billion tons of

economically recoverable coal in this country—enough to last us for at least three centuries at current consumption rates.

And, they further point out, although that represents 90% of

and allow acid water to seep into streams.

And to the fact that coal contains ash and sulfur which, if not controlled, can pollute the air when burned.

Still, we at Atlantic Richfield's ARCO Coal Company believe that today the advantages of coal outweigh its disadvantages. And so do the many Americans who have invested with us.

That's because these days we have extremely tough environmental laws.

Laws that require the restoration of mined lands and the protection of air and water resources. Laws that ensure that coal mine areas are properly restored and that newly constructed or converted power plants reduce air pollution to protect health and welfare.

our domestic energy resources, coal currently supplies less than 20% of our energy production.

It's true, that with greater usage, coal could give us as much as one half of the new energy we'll need between now and he year 2000—enough to help loosen the dangerous ties that bind us to expensive and nsecure foreign oil.

But those who insist that coal is bad point o abandoned mines which scar the landscape

Of course, environmental controls are expensive. But they are a worthwhile investment when you consider that the cost of using coal is still less than half of the current cost of using oil.

And when you consider that coal can also be converted into transportation fuels such as gasoline and diesel fuel—reducing even more our dependence on foreign oil—it seems obvious that we ought to reassess our old prejudices against this most abundant of all fossil fuels.

At least Atlantic Richfield thinks so.

There are no easy answers.



Atlantic Richfield Company

# BREAKING THE LINE

The bard of Newark's department stores

by Hugh Kenne

Y THE best count available, that of the 1980-81 Directory of American Poets and Fiction Writers (published by Poets & Writers, Inc.), 3,536 poets are more or less at large on this continent; the alphabetical sorting runs from Aal, Katharyn Machan to Zweig, Paul, not omitting David UU of Kingston, Ont., and Verandah Porche of Brattleboro, Vt. You qualify as a poet if you have published ten or more poems in three or more different U.S. literary magazines, at least one of them since 1960; and "Books do not substitute for the magazine publication requirement." Only half that many fiction writers could be turned up; writing prose tires the

N THE DAYS before computerizable criteria, it was only intermittently a matter of public record that William Carlos Williams was a poet at all. In his mid-seventies he was still being rejected by the Hudson Review; I stood by once as he opened their return envelope. And it pleased him pathetically that he had been asked to read poems, amid the Christmas rush, in, as I remember, a Newark department store. Next to the escalators it would have been, with the Santa-bells jangling and the numbed throng ascending toward lawnjeray and p'fume. One time an American crowd had been an element in which his mind flashed. dolphinlike:

Hugh Kenner is the author of The Pound Era and many other books.

...It is summer, it is the solstice the crowd is cheering, the crowd is laughing in detail permanently, seriously without thought

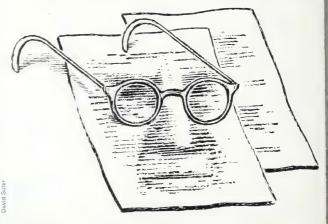
Did he read "At the Ball Game" to the December crowd? It was four decades since he'd written it. You envied his stamina. A heart attack and his first two strokes had still not killed him.

And his voice could carry. Up from the cellar one evening came a brandy he'd been paid for delivering a baby and not uncorked all those decades. His right arm was near-paralyzed and it would be up to me to measure out amber drops older than I was. I bent my wrist, a-quiver in the web of his injunctions: "Care-

ful, careful." The stuff was precious I was careful, careful. But then eye ing the stinted portion, "More More!" A sharp rising inflection, th kind that brings charge nurses scur rying. Folks must have heard tha second "More!" down the street.

The urgencies of his own crisp propulsive voice were what rang in his head as he worked, ejaculating the phrases, shaping the measure Was it 6 A.M., or was it 5, that the typewriter woke me? Not clickety clickety, but a dogged clack . . . clack . . . clack . . . clack . He grasped the wrist o his right hand with his left, steered the forefinger over a key, and let it drop.

He was seated at a wonder of the 1950s, an electric typewriter, presented by the hospital staff when he retired. Now that slapping a carriage



ightward the old way had gotten wkward, there was virtue in the auomated return. He had only to aim and drop the heavy finger, and lo, I new line. No poet started new lines is deliberately as Williams, or on is elusive a principle. Through his lead ran another rhythm than the black... clack....

The measure intervenes,
to measure is all we know,
a choice among the
measure . . .

the measured dance
"unless the scent of a rose
startle us anew"...

-letter by letter, too intent to noice his sleepy spectator.

INE Ridge Road, Rutherford, N.J., was a big wooden exercise in the Victorian of a small-town doctor's house except that walls were hung and attic runks filled with mementoes of American Modernism. What sort of ife had been able to manage that combination?

The Autobiography Williams dashed off in three months of 1951 weaves its underplayed vignettes out of details as often as not misremembered. The first stroke terminated his ability to revise it. The Reed Whittemore biography of 1975 conveys, through its arch readability, a Connecticut ironist's reluctance to quite believe in any "Poet from Jersey." Joyce Kilmer, it reminds us, was also from Jersey, and it's he, not Williams, whom they honored in naming a rest stop on the Jersey Turnpike.

(I think that I shall never see A W.C.W. WC.)

And now Paul Mariani's William Carlos Williams: A New World Naked pours out more information than we'd dreamed of, in a rush that seems to have overwhelmed copy editing.\* (Pound's Confucian Unwobbling. Pivot even gets cited as "Wobbling.") It's a shaggy, prolonged bear-hug of a book; hardly a sentence couldn't be quickened by excisions. "At home there were the usual domestic satisfactions and difficulties of

\* McGraw-Hill, \$22.95.

any young married couple." (Delete either "at home" or "domestic," either "usual" or "any.") "Next day—Saturday—Williams had a chance to hear George Antheil play his own modern atonal music. It was, he thought, startling but quite good in its own way." ("Modern" is redundant with "atonal"; also strike "own"; and is the last phrase an indirect quote—Williams at his slackest—or a paraphrase—Mariani at his usual?)

"His was a life devoid of the dramatic tragedy or intense pathos of some other poets..." More adjectival saturation bombing—"dramatic," "intense"—no, the point is not that Strunk & White weren't digested, the point is that one's mind tires in discarding such words throughout a long book that seems twice as long as it is, and hence half as faithful to its subject's celerity as the imitative form it aspires to would require.

Imparting speed to his idiom was the poet's lifelong concern: not Hemingway laconism, which is a role, but energy like an inside pitch, to whip round the endings of those impossibly short lines: an energy that seems to inhere not in the speaker but in the language, and can quicken any banality. What it seems to handle, its red wheelbarrow, its leafless vines, its cod's head, is but necessary pretext. A Williams poem is no more "about" anything it names than a game of baseball is about a ball. But no ball, no game; and no wheelbarrow, no poem.

o DAY has passed since 1970 that I have not thought about Williams," writes Mariani in a sentence to be believed, which also tells us that he can somehow write as he does with models like

The pure products of America go crazy—

ringing in his ears.

Yet his sheer devotion has engendered a book that helps: the generous Williams-eye view of the life of Williams that (in contradistinction to Reed Whittemore's amused

distance) preserves no distance, conveying the daily urgency of the house calls and letters and talk and anguish and elation and bedroom escapades and sea voyages and writing and frenzied rewriting through which Williams achieved what he triumphantly did: the definition of an American poetic idiom.

"Williams enters me but I cannot enter him," Robert Lowell wrote in 1961 (in the Winter number of the Hudson Review, of all places). "He sees and hears what we all see and hear and what is most obvious, but no one else has found this a help or an inspiration.... When I say that I cannot enter him, I am almost saying that I cannot enter America." Yes.

"No one else has found this a help or an inspiration," but Williams did, with his inarticulate persistence that could never quite formulate what needed doing yet could find the way to do it: at what cost! Thousands of hours of frantic naïve work, hundreds of thousands of crumpled sheets of paper, no one knows how many junked typewriters, ruptured friendships, immense drafts on his wife's patience...

His wife. Her name was Florence (Floss); she had been his second choice after her glamorous sister Charlotte got betrothed to his brother Ed, whom she later didn't marry (and that betrothal estranged Bill for good from Ed). "Hard and useful as the handle of a spade," Floss sustained every disorder, stemmed every crisis. After his eyes couldn't find the beginning of the next line it was she who read to him. Chapman's Homer I can testify to: the two of them on the sofa, Bill's hands clasped between his knees, his head inclined to catch through Flossie's low, loved monotone the cadence in which John Keats had caught "deepbrow'd Homer."

It was Floss who placed the phone call to Verner Clapp, of the Dogpatch name, to find out what he'd meant by his 1952 letter about a "full investigation" before Bill could take up the Library of Congress poetry consultantship they'd offered not once but twice. Well, answered Clapp of the Library's Loyalty Board, Dr.

Williams had sure gotten around a lot. What did that mean? Well, hadn't her husband been in Germany and Austria? Yes, back in 1910 and 1924 (she might have added, to study pediatrics). Well, resumed Clapp, he sure had gotten around.

Whatever he was charged with the indictment seems to have included publishing in Partisan Review—he was never cleared, never not cleared, and never served. The ordeal sent him for eight weeks into

a madhouse.

IOGRAPHERS are at the mercy of their material. The Clapp episode is reconstructed in detail from the letters by which Floss kept various friends posted. Something we'd much rather hear about, Bill Williams's earliest encounters with Wallace Stevens, is wholly absent from the narrative; on page 125 Stevens is suddenly "his plump, groomed, fastidious friend." How did that come about? Presumably in 1915, when contributors to Alfred Kreymborg's Others used to meet in some unheated shack on the lower Palisades to hear one another read. But no record survives.

By page 473 (it is now 1942) Stevens is "one of the few poets he deeply admired," though the Stevens Letters disclose a cooler view of Williams, whom he'd admonished to "settle on 'a single manner or mood' and let that position become 'thoroughly matured and exploited,' rather than keep going after his incessant new beginnings." They were antipodal. Stevens's was a mandarin poetic, metered speech keeping its distance from the vulgate, deriving its periphrases and its dislocations of sense from fin-de-siècle mannerisms he'd imitated in his 'prentice days. Yet the two kept in oftenguarded touch: it's a pity to have so sketchy a reconstruction of the tensions.

It was Stevens who, in introducing the Williams Collected Poems of 1934, gave a generation of commentators their catchword, "anti-poetic," a term that missed the eager impartiality with which a Williams poem can traverse its materials. A thorough

nantic he supposed Bill was, chering from his tower (tower!) his
exceptional view of the public dump
and the advertising signs of Snider's
Catsup, Ivory Soap and Chevrolet
Cars": items with no tickets of admission to a Stevens poem, save
(obliquely) "Man on the Dump,"
which we can even read as an effort
to imagine being Williams.

Is it peace,
Is it a philosopher's honeymoon,
one finds
On the dump? Is it to sit among
mattresses of the dead,
Bottles, pots, shoes and grass and
murmur aptest eve ...?

No, that was not how it was, not a murmured yearning. We have still no terminology for his innovation, radical as the discovery of the transistor, which was to find the way of making into part of a poem such an arrangement as this:

(To make the language record it, facet to facet not bored out—

with an augur.
—to give also the unshaven,
the rumblings of a
catastrophic past, a delicate
defeat—vivid simulations of
the mystery . )

Try it this way: most "free verse" implies regular verse. Behind it, as Eliot wrote sixty-four years ago, lurks the ghost of some regular metric. That ghost says, "I am in my singing robes. I am not disregarding norms, I am raising their ritual to a ritual still more arcane. If I use the twelve-tone row I remember Mozart. Hear my ancient voice behind this jagged page." Even Whitman's free verse says, "Remember the King James Bible, the Psalms; remember the catalogues in the Song of Songs."

This happens because line divisions, in reinforcing syntactic ones, make us conscious of pausing where we'd pause anyhow, thus moving the casualness of the sentence to the plane of "art." Eliot:

The winter evening settles down With smell of steaks in passageways.

Six o'clock.

The burnt-out ends of smoky days...

Williams in his early days did th kind of thing too:

I will teach you my townspeople how to perform a funeral...

...a 1917 poem that was read his graveside. But syncopate tho divisions—

the dirty
snow—the humility of the snow
that
silvers everything and is
trampled and lined with use—yet
falls again, the silent birds
on the still wires of the sky,
the blur
of wings as they take off
together...

—and suddenly the speed of nor redundant words serves to separat the utterance from causal speed without ritualizing it, so off-baland do those odd breaks throw our rhyth mic habits.

We read in something like a na ural voice, while at the edge of attertion something is *tugging*.

what to say about this quaity. As long ago as 1933 Wi liams himself wrote of th difficulty of saying something abou "new" work; most often, he said "we set in motion an antiquate machine whose enormous creakin and heavy and complicated motion frighten the birds, flatten the grass and fill the whole countryside wit smoke."

Despite creakings, Mariani's b ography is no such machine. Save by its love and by the details it preserves, it contains many pages t which readers will turn again: th one, for instance, that contains th tribute to Whitman Williams neve published. Since he'd thought i might do to end Paterson 4 I ca surely use it to end this:

and the waves
called to him and
he answered, drilling his voice to
their advance
driving the words above

driving the words above the returning clatter of stone with courage, labor and abandon the word, the word, the word....

HARPER'S/DECEMBER 198



# MORE FACTS!

One sort of scholarship

by Kenneth S. Lynn

IDED BY the co-editors and research assistants he has assembled around him on the campus of the University of South Carolina, Matthew J. Bruccoli has spent the past quarter of a century battening on the literary reputations of Ring Lardner, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, John O'Hara, Raymond Chandler, James Gould Cozzens, and Ross Macdonald. An anthology of Hemingway's deservedly forgotten cub reportage and a grossly overblown assessment of O'Hara's literary achievement are typical of the tawdry books that the Bruccoli cottage industry is forever foisting on the world in the name of discriminating scholarship.

But it is the glamorous author of The Great Gatsby whose life and work have been most frequently exploited by the self-promoting professor from South Carolina. On the first printed page of Some Sort of Epic Grandeur,\* his new biography of the novelist, Bruccoli lists a stupefying total of fifteen other books on Fitzgerald that bear his name-and the list is by no means complete. Whether out of modesty, which is unlike him, or out of sloppiness, which is, Bruccoli neglects to mention his inconsequential additions to bibliographical lore in F. Scott Fitzgerald: Collector's Handlist (1964) and The Merrill Checklist of F. Scott Fitzgerald (1970), or his microscopic contribution to literary appreciation in Apparatus for a Definitive Edition: F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Last Tycoon (1976), or his totally inexcusable reprint, in 1978, of the screenplay \* Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, \$25.

of Erich Maria Remarque's mediocre novel *Three Comrades*, which the badly demoralized Fitzgerald forced himself to write for Hollywood monev in 1937.

Of the earlier books on Fitzgerald for which Bruccoli does take credit, his 1973 edition of the novelist's previously unpublished ledger is without question a fascinating document.

Kenneth S. Lynn teaches American history at Johns Hopkins University and is the author of books on Mark Twain, William Dean Howells, and other American writers. For in its two hundred legal-sized pages, Fitzgerald set down a remarkably candid outline of his life from his fourteenth to his fortieth year, as well as a statement of his annual earnings from 1919 through 1936 and a meticulous history of all his published fiction through June 1937. Although Fitzgerald did not live to write his autobiography, in the ledger he at least made important preparations for doing so. By relieving interested readers of the necessity of consulting the original handwritten



om Some Sort of Epic Grandeur by Matthew J. Bruccoli

unuscript in the archives of the zgerald Collection at the Princeton liversity Library, Bruccoli permed a real service.

Perhaps as many as four of the per Fitzgerald books of which uccoli is presumably proud were o worth publishing. But the retining ten are extremely dubious eces of work, and it is significant it the most dubious of the lot is only one that required someng more of the cottage-industry ptain than mere clerical skills. In ott and Ernest: The Authority of ilure and the Authority of Success 978), Bruccoli abandoned his ual role as a cultural middleman ecializing in bibliographies, anologies, picture books, Princeton iangle Club cassettes, and assorted ickknacks, and took on the more manding assignment of writing a story of the friendship between tzgerald and Hemingway. But the ly way that Bruccoli was able to me to grips with his subject was relying on the hoariest of received inions. From first to last, the auor of Scott and Ernest had nothing orthwhile to say about either Fitzrald or Hemingway that had not ng since been said by other critics. s dependence on clichés did not ther Bruccoli, however. As he lled his work force to order and arged forward into the composin of a full-scale biography of tzgerald, he did so in the conence that he possessed something at more than made up for his lack fresh ideas.

HENEVER he was asked to say what was new in the biography he had undertaken, Brucli tells us in the preface to Some rt of Epic Grandeur, he always plied, "More facts." This little ry then leads him to proclaim that biographer's first duty is to get ings right." Twenty years have ssed since the appearance of adrew Turnbull's Scott Fitzgerald, are reminded, but at long last have corrected and augmented e record."

On inspection, most of Bruccoli's

vaunted corrections and augmentations turn out to be the most sterile fact-mongering imaginable. In relating, for instance, the circumstances of Fitzgerald's death, which he does in his first chapter, he not only insists on our knowing that the novelist was pronounced dead by a doctor named Nelson, but he goes on to provide us with the even more unwanted information that "the body was removed to the Pierce Brothers Mortuary, 720 West Washington Boulevard, in Los Angeles."

Furthermore, there are times when Bruccoli's delight in identifying a negligible mistake in some other biography or memoir of Fitzgerald is made to look ridiculous by his concomitant failure to recognize the really serious flaws in the account in question. Thus he has a fine time demonstrating that Hemingway erred in saying in his memoir of the Twenties, A Moveable Feast, that the first time he ever laid eyes on Fitzgerald was in the spring of 1925, when the novelist walked into the Dingo Bar in Paris in the company of a fellow Princetonian named Duncan Chaplin. But it couldn't have been Chaplin who was with Fitzgerald, Bruccoli announces, because Chaplin was not even in Europe in the spring of 1925. let alone in the Dingo Bar, and Bruccoli has a letter from Chaplin to prove it! The discovery is scarcely earthshaking, but at least it could have served to alert the biographer to the possibility that every story that Hemingway tells about Fitzgerald in A Moveable Feast has been somewhat embroidered, if not made up completely.

Alas, Bruccoli soon proceeds to repeat without the slightest display of skepticism the most suspicious of all the memoir's eyebrow-raising tales about Hemingway's literary contemporaries. Out of "respect for Hemingway's expertise in masculine matters," says the biographer, paraphrasing the memoirist, Fitzgerald turned to him for counsel when his wife, Zelda, complained that "his penis was too small to satisfy her." After checking him in a men's room, Hemingway contemptuously informed his friend that he was "normal." In his naïveté. Bruccoli fails to assess

the credibility of this terrible story in the light of Hemingway's own sexual anxieties and of his obsessive effort over many decades to persuade the world that his allaround expertise in matters masculine was no myth. Nor does the biographer reflect on the fact that A Moveable Feast was written toward the end of Hemingway's life, when a great many things were driving him crazy, including the horrifying realization that Fitzgerald's literary prestige had overtaken his own. What better way to pull the plug on the resurgent popularity of his rival than by depicting Fitzgerald in a men's room with his pants down, beseeching a self-confident Hemingway for reassurance?

For all his fetishism about getting things right, then, Bruccoli gets a lot of things wrong. But even if Epic Grandeur contained no errors of any kind it would still be an awful book. because it is built on the impoverishing assumption that the heaping up of facts is what biographical writing is all about, and that historical scene-setting, literary interpretation, evaluation of personality, and every other sort of analytical activity are dispensable extras. Thus Bruccoli has so little interest in, or understanding of, the historical period with which Fitzgerald's career will be forever identified that he is unembarrassed to sum it up in five paragraphs consisting entirely of such vapid sentences as "The Roaring Twenties were typified by the bull market and Prohibition." As for literary interpretation, Epic Grandeur ends with the assertion that "Fitzgerald is now permanently placed with the greatest writers who ever lived"; but the statement is nothing but hot air, for nowhere in the book can one find a comparison of Fitzgerald's achievements with those of other writers. And for all its documentation of the events of Fitzgerald's life, Epic Grandeur draws its evaluations of his personality exclusively from the comments of other observers; in the pages of Bruccoli's book we do not meet a man whom we have never understood quite so well before, we merely encounter the familiar beautitul-and-damned figure of the Fitz-general myth.

addition to being an intel-In tual dud, Bruccoli's book is an aesthetic disaster. Epic Grandeur may contain more documentation than Turnbull's Scott Fitzgerald, but the charm of Turnbull's book is that it manages to shadow forth the Princeton that Fitzgerald knew as an undergraduate and to make an army lieutenant's romance with the reigning belle of Montgomery, Alabama, live again in our minds. Epic Grandeur, on the other hand, is poetically barren. Instead of shaping his materials into evocative designs, Bruccoli just keeps deluging us with more and more facts, as if they had the power to speak for themselves. Among other indigestible lumps, his biography contains complete listings of the tables of contents of various volumes of Fitzgerald's short stories; two pages of uninterrupted quotation from a memo by Fitzgerald to Hemingway about ways to improve A Farewell to Arms; four and a half pages of uninterrupted quotation from the stenographic transcript of a discussion between Fitzgerald and Zelda about their nightmarish marriage; and a ten-page sequence of documents beginning with two and a half pages of uninterrupted quotation from a letter by Fitzgerald to Zelda about their nightmarish marriage, followed by two sentences by Bruccoli, followed by five and a half pages of uninterrupted quotation from a letter by Zelda to Fitzgerald about their nightmarish marriage, followed by three sentences by Bruccoli, followed by half a page of uninterrupted quotation from a memo by a psychiatrist named Forel about Zelda's mental condition, followed by three paragraphs by Bruccoli, and ending with half a page of uninterrupted quotation from a selfjustifying letter by Fitzgerald to Forel.

NA SENSE, Epic Grandeur is not a biography at all, but just another cottage-industry anthology of Fitzgeraldiana. Documentation, in Bruccoli's book, does the biographer's work for him. Yet the in-

teresting and ironic fact is that the documentation also undoes the biographer's work. For although Bruccoli is blissfully unaware of it, his extended quotations do not always serve to support his romantic ideas about Fitzgerald's life and work.

Epic Grandeur's appreciative discussion of The Great Gatsby, for instance, resounds with critical clichés about Fitzgerald and the American Dream

The novelist once defined the essence of America as "a willingness of the heart," we are told, and it is this vision of historical innocence and generosity that furnished him with the moral yardstick by which he measured the corruption of "the second-rate people" who, on summer nights, used Gatsby's Long Island estate as an amusement park-Maurice A. Flink, the Hammerheads, Beluga the tobacco importer, and all the rest of the rotten lot. Yet, seventy pages earlier in the biography, in a chapter describing Fitzgerald's visit to Rome in the summer of 1921, we find the text of a letter to Edmund Wilson that reveals that the critical animus that would inspire him to write Gatsby might more accurately be described as an unwillingness of the heart:

God damn the continent of Europe. It is of merely antiquarian interest. Rome is only a few years behind Tyre + Babylon. The negroid streak creeps northward to defile the nordic race. Already the Italians have the souls of blackamoors. Raise the bars of immigration and permit only Scandinavians, Teutons, Anglo Saxons and Celts to enter .... I think its [sic] a shame that England and America didn't let Germany conquor [sic] Europe. Its [sic] the only thing that would have saved the fleet of tottering old wrecks. My reactions were all philistine, anti-socialistic, provincial + racially snobbish. I believe at last in the white man's burden. We are as far above the modern frenchman [sic] as he is above the negro [sic].

The brilliantly satirical notation of the guests who exploited Gatsby's hospitality was the work of a writer who wanted to prevent people with names like Beluga and Flink from entering the United States. It wonder T. S. Eliot was excited about Gatsby; like his own early poetry, raised xenophobia to high art.

N HIS remarks on Gatsby Bru coli also quotes-characteristi ally without comment-Fit gerald's admission that the m jor flaw in the novel is that "I gav no account (and had no feeling about or knowledge of) the em tional relations between Gatsby an Daisy from the time of their r union to [Gatsby's death]." Why it that Fitzgerald had the imagina tive power to depict paradise los but not paradise regained? The ques tion ought to interest a biographer one would think-if one did not know Bruccoli, that is. As he makes clea in the preface to Epic Grandeur "I do not practice psychiatry."
Zelda's accusation that her husbane was a homosexual is repeated in the course of the book only to be dis missed as the hallucination of woman who was going mad, and while the biographer endorses Hem ingway's tall story about the short arm inspection in the men's room. he does not allow it to become the occasion for a discussion of Fitz gerald's sexual orientation. All Bruc coli is interested in is the facts, man-Was or was not Fitzgerald's penis of sufficient size to satisfy his wife? Hemingway was sure that it was, and furthermore, Bruccoli says, in what may very well be the most inane exhibition of fact-mongering in his entire career, two other commentators on Fitzgerald's intromittent organ, "Arnold Gingrich, who once saw Fitzgerald with his bathrobe open, and Sheilah Graham, who slept with him," have also "attested that it was normal."

But Bruccoli's fond belief that the Adonis of American literature had no hidden sexual secret is unwittingly called into question by a letter he introduces into his chapter on Fitzgerald's junior year at Princeton, in which the collegian offers detailed advice to his younger sister Annabel about how to dress, how to walk, how to take care of her skin, and so

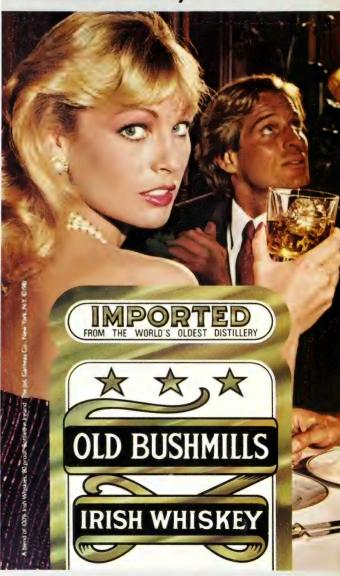
n. "A girl should always be careth" runs one of the typical warnigs in this extraordinary document,
about such things as underskirt
howing, long drawers showing uner stocking, bad breath, mussy eyerows (with such splendid eyebrows
s yours you should brush them or
et them and train them every mornig and night as I advised you to
o long ago. They oughtn't to have
hair out of place)."

The intensity of imaginative inolvement in the problems of femiine appearance that is revealed in ais letter is sufficient to call to mind 'itzgerald's smash-hit success as a roman in a Princeton Triangle Club how. He was so convincingly allurng in the part that The New York imes and several other newspapers an a photo of him in drag. That ublicity in turn brought him fan etters from a number of men who vanted to meet him, as well as an ffer from a vaudeville agent to book im as a female impersonator. Alhough he turned down the offer, 'itzgerald did attend a Psi U dance t the University of Minnesota lressed as a girl.

"I didn't have the two top things -great animal magnetism or mony," Fitzgerald once observed with egret in his notebooks. Animal magetism in his novels and stories, lowever, is possessed only by highly exed brutes whom he clearly depises, like Daisy Buchanan's husand, Tom; the men in his work vith whom Fitzgerald identifies are passive, pleading creatures like Satsby, who display no interest in exual fulfillment. Fitzgerald may 10t have been a practicing homoexual-in all likelihood, he had no experience of that sort—but some cind of sexually abnormal imaginaion surely informs his fiction. Just why his curiously unrealized versions of romantic love have meant so much o American college students of both sexes in the years since the Second World War is a fascinating cultural question. But for attempts to answer it we will have to wait for the appearance of a more resourceful biographer than one such as Matthew I. Bruccoli.

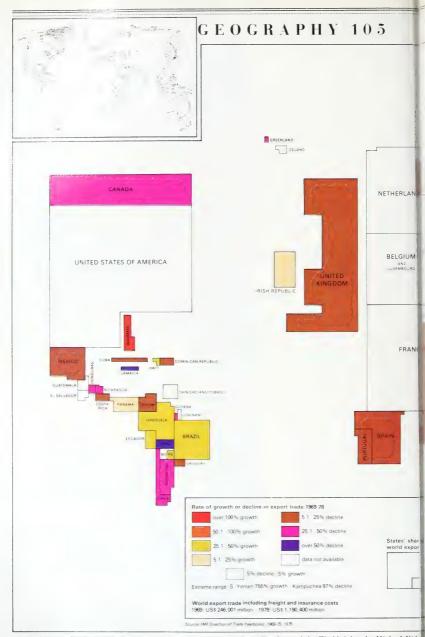
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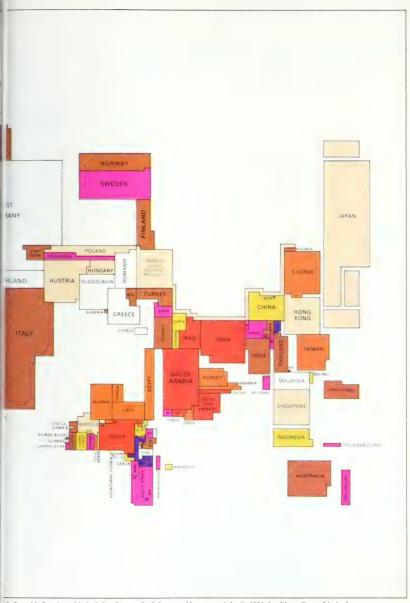
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nd Ronald Segal, published by Simon & Schuster. Map copyright © 1981 by Pluto Press Limited.

# **BURIED HONOR**

A world without dragons

by Frances Taliaferre

The Return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English Gentleman, by Mark Girouard. 312 pages. Yale University Press, \$29.95; \$35 after December 31, 1981.

**▼** ENTLEMEN are in short supply this year. In our age of disguises it is quite acceptable for an ordinary fellow to appear in public as a cowboy, a spy, a buccaneer, a fop, or a motorcycle Visigoth. One may dress for success, for negotiation, for machismo, even for Lebensraum, Greenhaired Mohawk punks are no less common than androids whose heads bulge with electronic earmuffs, and the winters thud with the soft collisions of down-filled Michelin men. The costumes are legion and so are the identities, but there is one disguise that hardly anyone thinks to assume: the armor of the parfit gentil knight.

What has become of him? We used to see him fairly often in the movies: when he was not being Sydney Carton, he dressed for dinner in the jungle, and he achieved gallant self-denial and timely heroism in any number of war films. Sometimes a great athlete was the exemplar, the natural gentleman whose grace bespoke his valor and his sportsmanship. Nor was this knightly fellow a laggard in love. Ladies in distress could hope for his rescue, and young girls easily imagined that some day their prince would come.

Frances Taliaferro teaches at The Brearley School in New York.

The myth survives, quainter with every year, its radiance fading as the century of the anti-hero draws to a close. There are some to mourn it. Like Miniver Cheevy, they "curse the commonplace" and "assail the seasons" of contemporary life; they revile the trendies and the Yahoos who wear cowboy boots with everything and have the vague impression that Camelot was the name of the Kennedy place in Hyannisport, Alas, romance has ceased to tinge our moral ideals, such as they are: we create the morality we need, and chivalry is nowhere in it.

The Victorians and Edwardians felt differently. What we still recognize as gentlemanly behavior is their legacy, that code whose culmi-



nation and destruction was World War I, but whose origins may be found in Malory and the chansonde geste. Mark Girouard traces the nineteenth-century revival of medieval chivalry—in art, literature, in stitutions, and customs—in this fascinating history, The Return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English Gentleman. As is so often the case with social history, the view from one quirky angle offers a surprisingly full understanding of an entire period.

EDIEVAL chivalry took was as its premise, but en joined its warriors to adhere to a high standard of behavior, "adapted to the social structure of feudalism and amended by the cult of courtly love." Chivalry required service: to the Church and the feudal lord, to women, to the weak and the oppressed. We know the cast of characters-damsels in distress, paladins, enchanters, dragons-as we know the trappings of chivalry: the castle, the love gage the heraldic banners flying at the tournament. Medieval knights may in actuality have been nasty, brutish. and short, but the ideal remained immaculate.

After an exotic Indian summer during the reign of Elizabeth I, who thoroughly enjoyed all the paraphernalia of feudal devotion, chivalry went relatively unnoticed for some centuries. As Girouard points out, the Renaissance and the classical revival provided an "alternative cul-

ure," the scientific revolution called nedieval beliefs in doubt, and eigheenth-century rationalism found the hivalric virtues an easy target.

But the Middle Ages returned to avor. Antiquarians began to disover the delights of medieval literture, artifacts, and architecture. The most celebrated connoisseur vas. of course, Horace Walpole, whose house at Strawberry Hill was Gothic extravaganza.) The menace f the French Revolution made the table, monarchist Middle Ages esecially appealing to British conervatives, who might express their eudal preferences by collecting arnor or building themselves castles. Seorge IV, while still Prince Regent, and himself painted as the Black rince; by the time of his coronation n 1821, which was mounted with eofeudal splendor, the revival of nedieval chivalry was an idea whose ime had come.

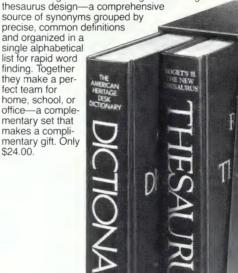
Lord Byron laughed at the "montrous mummeries of the Middle Ages." It was for Sir Walter Scott o transform the antiquarian's rapure into widespread popular enthuiasm. Scott was a passionate reearcher, a lover of original sources and richly instructive footnotes. ame from infancy, he was also a reat admirer of brave deeds in batle. In his historically sound but omantically stylized version of the Middle Ages, all was as it should e: the clang of armor and the groans of dastard knights accompanied the triumph of honor. Scott's popularity was immense. His descripions of Yuletide in the baronial halls of Merrie England influenced generaions of country-house Christmases. His nineteenth-century version of the snight errant-honor and passionate valor tempered by delicacy-shaped he Victorian idea of a gentleman.

Ivanhoe can be read with pleasure today, though hardly with the wild devotion it inspired in its time. (In 1820, a year after publication, five dramatic versions of Ivanhoe ran concurrently in London theaters, one of them featuring a tournament scene with twenty knights on horseback.) An even more influential book, now quite forgotten, was The Broad Stone of Honour, by Kenelm Henry

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Digby, which appeared in ever-expanding editions between 1822 and 1877. Digby, a true zealot-indeed, a chivalry nut-subtitled his book "Rules for the Gentlemen of England" and "The True Sense and Practice of Chivalry," and exhorted his readers to noble fellowship with Bayard, Alexander, and the Knights of the Round Table, The Broad Stone of Honour was widely read by schoolboys and schoolmasters, by Wordsworth, Ruskin, and the Pre-Raphaelites, and, most usefully, by Lord Baden-Powell, who turned to Digby's code of the natural gentleman when he founded the Boy Scouts.

The epitome of medieval madness in the first half of the nineteenth century was the Eglinton Tournament of 1838. Part sporting event, part social engagement, it had Tory society all a-twitter. Lord Eglinton, the noble sponsor, was joined by twelve other knights, all Tories, all sportsmen, who could bear the enormous expense of outfitting themselves for the lists. Assuming such names as "Knight of the Red Lion" and "Knight of the White Rose," they gathered on a fine summer day at Eglinton Castle in Ayrshire, with flags flying and a hundred thousand spectators in attendance. (Corbould's equestrian portrait of Lord Eglinton in his golden suit of armor, all glint and plume, suggests that candy-box chivalry was the tone of the day.) Alas, just as the Oueen of Beauty prepared to mount her snow-white palfrey the heavens opened, and the squelch of mud drowned out the clash of arms. The Eglinton Tournament was a rout, a soggy chaos, a sort of neofeudal Woodstock. Queen Victoria, who was not amused, found the whole thing "the greatest absurdity."

Meanwhile, a less frivolous medievelism was gathering strength. Malory's Morte d'Arthur, out of print and out of style for a hundred years, began to reappear. Tennyson became the great propagator of Arthurian legend, but of an Arthurian legend imperialized, Victorianized, even bowdlerized, as Tennyson purified the fleshly conflicts of Malory. In Idylls of the King, where spirit sub-

dues fiesh as befits the morality of an artial nation, kings and knights ome "pattern Victorian gentle"and responsible members of the ruling class. Gladstone piously materibed Tennyson's Arthur as "selftins man and stainless gentleman ... the great pillar of the moral order, and the resplendent top of human excellence."

The Pre-Raphaelite painters and poets thrilled to a more carnal Malory. Their subject was not the stainless Galahad but the adulterous Guenevere: the Arthurian tradition sanctified by Tennyson became their occasion for works of explicit sensuality. Girouard's excellent illustrations include such paintings as Edward Burne-Jones's "The Beguiling of Merlin," in which the enchanter is bewitched by a sorceress of dangerous sinuosity, and William Morris's "Queen Guenevere," whose central figure stands palely beside a rumpled bed, her mood one of evident postcoital tristesse. As Girouard succinctly observes, "Courtly love à la Pre-Raphaelite did indeed provide an alternate model of chivalry to Tennyson," one which amorists like Wilfred Scawen Blunt could invoke as they pressed medieval romance into the service of Victorian adultery.

UCH FLESHLY digressions seem, however, to run counter to the pattern of nineteenth-Century chivalry. For all its occasional silliness, it was a purposeful movement, at first teaching a generalized altruism, eventually finding specific "crusades" to rescue the victims of poverty, lawlessness, and oppression. The ideals of Victorian chivalry "were inextricably bound up with the concept of a ruling class; but the ruling class which they produced was, on the whole, brave, honest, honourable and self-controlled."

The public schools may have too insistently identified chivalry with proficiency at cricket, but both Scouting and "muscular Christianity" encouraged schoolboys to honor the "knightly values of fellowship, discipline, exercise and physical provess" that Digby had preached in *The Broad Stone of Honour*. Baden-Power

ell's handbook, Scouting for Boys proclaimed, "A gentleman is anyon who carries out the rules of chivalr of the knights"; with surprisingle few caddish exceptions, England's middle-class gentlemen accepted the ideal of loyal service and sportsman ship in the great game of life.

The Great War seemed at first to be another step toward a high chivalric destiny. The nation's honowas at stake, and knightly Britain would slay the German dragon Fighting for a just cause was the noblest activity of man; the greates heroism was in the purifying trial obattle. The exaltation of the war's first few months, the enormous numbers who quickly volunteered for honor's sake, even the recruiting posters with their imagery of knights and angels, suggest that the coming of war satisfied a chivalric yearning.

No one foresaw the horror of it. Chivalry and patriotism, gentlemanly sportsmanship, honor, and "playing the game" were rendered irrelevant by the fact of twentieth-century war. Those ideals belonged "to another world, which seemed infinitely remote from the real world of mud, blood, boredom, fear, endurance, carnage and mutilation." The trenches were far from Roland's last stand at Roncesvalles; the Somme had nothing, nothing in common with Agincourt.

Mark Girouard's engaging history is as abundantly illustrated and as handsomely produced as his bestknown previous books, Life in the English Country House and The Victorian Country House. Unlike them, it fills the reader with mounting sadness: that these chivalric ideals will be savaged, this high innocence violated by the shock of total war. In the context of medieval chivalry, the 1914-18 war seems all the more inevitable and none the less tragic. The proper seguel to The Return to Camelot is Paul Fussell's brilliant, disturbing literary study The Great War and Modern Memory (Oxford, 1975). As Fussell suggests, the last word belongs to Northrop Frye: "The culture of the past is not only the memory of mankind, but our own buried life."

HARPER'S/DECEMBER 1981

### THE MIND'S EYE

by David Suter

#### THE MICROSCOPISTS

Two Views on Abortion: Microcosm and Macrocosm



# FRENCH AMNESIA

The holy left

by Frederick Brown

N THE June 21, 1981, issue of Le Nouvel Observateur, a journalist following Pierre Mauroy Lon his first official tour is quoted as having said: "When I telephone my paper and report that at 2 A.M. the Prime Minister of France is expatiating on the Popular Front, they'll think I'm crazy." Since the Popular Front figured prominently in the campaign, it would seem odd that anyone, much less a seasoned journalist, should have found this episode outlandish, unless he dismissed the invocations of Léon Blum and company as being nothing more than a rhetorical strategy calculated to enhance the Socialists' record of success. Party saints make useful traveling companions, but it is axiomatic that the office-seeker bids them farewell at his journey's end.

If the axiom has not held this time, a reason may be sought in the tendency of French leftist regimes to sanction their power with the argument that they possess greater humanity than others, and to picture themselves as the incumbents of a virtuous, more or less remote, past. Hence la gauche sacrée, the "holy left." After 1789, revolutionary leaders swept away the Bourbon monarchy in a flood of allusions to ancient Sparta and republican Rome. Throughout the Second Empire, Republicans marked time in the year

Frederick Brown is the author, most recently, of Theater and Revolution: The Culture of the French Stage (Viking).

1848, when history left them behind to ponder the golden moment that they felt Napoleon III had swindled them out of. During the Third Republic, whose original sin was its ruthless repression of the Paris Commune, those who considered themselves the Commune's spiritual posterity took to commemorating it on May 1, at a wall where several hundred Communards made their last stand. It could be said that each leftist generation reinvents, with such material as the age suggests, a lost utopia, an ancien régime, and a new order: each one finds its soul in evangelical distinctions between a "before" and an "after."

HE VIRTUE present-day Socialists claim for themselves rests, in some degree, on a belief that theirs is the one party entitled to view the last four decades with a clean conscience, that the Popular Front was a collective height from which France, having turned against herself, fell into a slough of internal hatred made for exploitation by opportunists. Mitterrand's victory has an epiphenomenon in the current passion for documents on the Occupation, which, until not long ago, was so generally treated as a dismal misadventure best forgotten that there prevailed over it something like de facto censorship (Marcel Ophüls was hard put to find a screen for The Sorrow

and the Pity). Now, at the Centr Beaubourg's Paris-Paris exhibition for example, visitors stand in rap attention before a small television set, watching newsreels filmed during the Vichy regime. Albums of photo graphs of Nazi-occupied Paris crowd bookstore windows and tables. A book entitled Vichy et les juifs, by Michael Marrus and Robert Paxtor -which shows France to have been diligent, when it was not enthusias tic, in applying measures against its Jewish population—created a grea stir, though it offended many people that two North American historians saw fit to meddle in what even gau chistes consider essentially a family quarrel.

No one would deny that this rec ollection of past odium favored Mitterrand, who, by declaring it his wish to pursue social reforms "interrupted" in 1938, before the Fall of France, evoked the dream not only of a heroic age but of a prelapsarian youth. "It's the first time in my life I'm proud to be French' was, in one variation or another, a sentiment often aired on the evening the newly elected president of the Republic walked to the Pantheon amid jubilant supporters, holding a rose. With his sure touch for the symbolically telling gesture, Mitterrand soon after decreed that the "Marseillaise," which, under Giscard d'Estaing, had become rather dirgelike, should be played in march time at all official ceremonies, as was the ase when French citizen-soldiers rst joined battle against enemies of he Republic in 1792, Year 1.

The rose, the march, and especialv the Pantheon-a secular mausosum whose entablature bears the nscription "Aux Grands Hommes La 'atrie Reconnaissante"-all served o inform Frenchmen that the Soialists were bent on rededicating rance to the Republic after years f impiety; that in Mitterrand they ad elected a leader more genuinely t home in the republican tradition. f not indeed in France, than his prelecessor. Where Giscard exemplified he technocrat's aversion to everyhing but facts and figures, Mitterand, who fancies himself a man of etters and has written some quite good pages on the beauties of rural ife, lost no time honoring those shades in whom the soul of France -or, as it has more often been called ince the Revolution, the "genius" of France-is vested.

Mitterrand's intellectual constittency has applied its skills with a eal that often leaves one quite reathless, not to say confounded. Thus, after a lunch for certain select nandarins at the Elysée Palace, ean-Francois Kahn, editor in chief of Les Nouvelles Littéraires, who had indured similar lunches under Pompidou and Giscard, praised Mitterand's table talk as if it were Samuel Johnson's and Henri Bergson's rolled nto one. "There was elegance but ulso fragility in Giscard's dialogue. In the other hand, the Mitterrandist word, imbued with knowledge and spiced with memories, borders at once on song and speech. It flows from the source," he wrote. "Unlike [Pompidou and Giscard], Mitterand never ceases to move through a space-time continuum. In him, past and future interlock. The new president is a man of continuity.'

ITTERRAND travels backward and forward with such ease, never losing north, because in France—in the time and space that distinguish this culture from every other—he recognizes landmarks as only a native can. Giscard's "fragility"

betrays the stranger whose movements seem too correct or "elegant" because his Frenchness is a veneer and even an imposture. What Kahnleft unsaid was said explicitly by the satirical weekly Le Canard Enchaîné, which last April published an anti-Giscard dossier entitled La Monarchie Contrariée ("The Frustrated Monarchy"), whose cover features Gainsborough's painting "Mr. and Mrs. Andrews," with the faces of Giscard and his wife superimposed on those of the British couple. Le Canard explains that "according to the cinéaste Claude Autant-Lara, Giscard has never consoled himself for not being British, so our cover ... will placate his nostalgia."

The notorious scams (magouilles is roughly the French equivalent, much used these days) that inspired some to compare Giscard's regime with the Second Empire were, no doubt, an important element in the elections, but collecting diamonds from Emperor Bokassa and otherwise using public office for personal or family gain proved less damaging to the ex-president than his aristocratic pretensions. While many French accept that greed motivates the office-seeker as a matter of course, they cannot stomach what they take to be bogus grandeur. The opposition, whenever it needed to score against Giscard, did not want for evidence of a man brittle and slightly daffy with vanity. Protocol acquired such importance that foreign dignitaries invited to dine at the Elysée got served after the president unless they came as heads of state or enjoyed ducal rank, which left mere prime ministers (of either sex) waiting; and if no peers were present, the chair opposite his own stood empty-a practice apparently borrowed from the royal pretender, the Count of Paris. When the president departed for India on a state visit. his auxiliaries saw to it that the airport lounge was decked out with antiques from the national furniture collection. Before a tour of the police school at Cannes-Ecluse, the president ordered that the police chosen to form his honor guard measure at least 6'1". During the electoral campaign, the president spoke

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PROVINCETOWN PLAYHOUSE 133 MacDougal Street, (212) 777-2571 on television of his love for Guy de Maupassant, a writer associated with the common man. This excursion into literature could not be undertaken until he had done some homework, for which purpose valuable documents, including first editions of Maupassant's work, were requisitioned from the Bibliothèque Nationale.

Such stories are legion, but the ones common men were least disposed to laugh off all bear on Giscard d'Estaing's name, or, rather, on that fraction of it-the "de"-which is known as a nobiliary particle. The Giscard clan acquired it fortyeight years ago, after demonstrating some tenuous relationship to Admiral Count Jean-Baptiste d'Estaing, who fought alongside Lafayette in the American War of Independence only to die, without issue, on a Revolutionary scaffold during the Terror. Periodic challenges, now from the right, now from the left, made them the more jealous of their appendage, and, indeed, the more resolute in their efforts to give it a genuine antique shine. In 1949, Giscard's father, Edmond, published at his own expense a book entitled La Monarchie Intérieure ("The Interior Monarchy"), which heaps scorn on self-ennobled bourgeois like Honoré de Balzac, who, "surreptitiously inserting before his name a chance particle, did not cease for all that to be the most vulgar man of his age, which included many." Someone so abounding in his own sense, as Henry James might have put it, can hardly be expected to have bestowed a lively sense of humor on his male heir.

When Giscard entered the Elysée, staff were given orders to buy portraits of the Admiral Count d'Estaing as they came on the market, money being no object. Moreover, he reinstituted a campaign, begun by the Giscards when they first d'Estainged themselves, to secure membership in the Cincinnati Society, an exclusive club for direct or collateral (but only blood-related) descendants of officers who fought in the War of Independence. With every expectation that his new eminence would allay such doubts as had hitherto troubled

the Cincinnati Society, he invited its French directors for lunch at the its seemed to be totally random order. "You are no doubt wondering why the tables are thus arranged," said Giscard once they had done eating. "This corresponds exactly to the arrangement of ships in the fleet commanded by my ancestor, Admiral d'Estaing, when he defeated the British." The Society succumbed, to the extent of awarding him honorary membership."

N THE euphoric commotion that attended Mitterrand's victory, one was ill advised to point one's finger at clouds on the horizon. which did not discourage Boris Souvarine from doing so with a fascinating memoir of Léon Blum, published by L'Express (July 3-9, 1981). It takes us back to the winter of 1939-40, when France was bogged down in what has come to be known as the Phony War. Souvarine, a charter member of the French Communist Party but since 1924 one of its most articulate defectors, had recently increased his stock by predicting, three months before events vindicated him, in a carefully reasoned article that most people dismissed as twaddle, that Stalin would one day stand with Hitler. His clairvoyance induced Léon Blum to summon him. Though Blum had fallen from power, the former prime minister

still exercised influence as leader of the Socialist Party and director of the Socialist newspaper Le Populain. What he proposed was that Souvarine should write a regular colum in Le Populaire analyzing militar operations (on the assumption that he military would sooner or late begin to operate).

Souvarine declined, for reason that took Blum altogether by sur prise. Under such circumstances a prevailed, it was, he explained, th chronicler's task not only to eluci date the military state of affairs but also to paint it rosy, and thereby help civilians to cope with all that war visited on them in the way o loneliness, fear, and material hard ship. This he could not do. "Wha do you mean? Explain yourself, said Blum, whose face had fallen "You don't seriously think we can be beaten, do you?" Souvarine ther proceeded to justify his pessimism adducing the fact that France had not gone to war with anything like the same élan it did in 1914, that i had never recovered from the bleed ing of Verdun, that neither its com munists, nor its fascists, nor its office: corps cherished the republic they were called on to defend. When he had finished, Blum, still incredulous could only say: "Pessimists are spec tators." The two men parted with mutual respect, and in due course Blum fell captive to the Nazis, who made a shambles of the French army

Chances are, this memoir was meant not to discredit Léon Blum whom Souvarine greatly admires or several counts, but to be weighed against the best-selling biographies of Blum and of Pierre Mendès-France by Jean Lacouture, who has become the Socialists' house Plutarch. Souvarine wrote it for France today. as a cautionary tale whose significance he formulates in a variation on André Gide's dictum that one does not create fine literature with fine sentiments: "Good democratic sentiments in the service of a just cause are not enough to deter an implacable enemy in an all-out war.' Learning lessons from history has never been man's strong suit, however, and Souvarine entertains no illusions that Mitterrand is less dis-

<sup>\*</sup> Giscard's hunting expeditions at home and abroad were yet another subject on which his foes dwelled with consternation. Such was his passion for the hunt that Le Canard Enchaîné, which kept a tally of the game he and his party bagged (January 26 at Chambord-forty-six wild boars; February 5, again at Chambord, fifty-cight wild boars; November 3, 1976, at Marly-893 specimens), took to calling him le viandard, or "meater." Is it true, as Le Canard states, that in Rumania, where bears enjoy special protection, a shoot was arranged for Giscard's pleasure, with, unbeknownst to him, a bear extracted from the state zoo? No matter. What Teddy Roosevelt could do with impunity in an age largely innocent of the word "ecology" contributed to the picture of Giscard as an ecological danger. One more reason for Mitterrand to have carried a rose.

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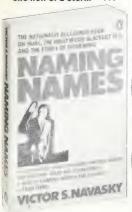
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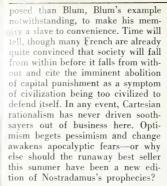
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NE CAN hardly talk about the past being shaped to assorted purposes without mentioning the so-called "Faurisson affair," whose dénouement was played out in court this summer after more than two years of passionate debate that saw an obscure college teacher become a cause célèbre.

Until 1974 Robert Faurisson seemed content to study esoteric French poetry of the nineteenth century and to argue, in what he wrote, interpretations that most authorities found paradoxical for the sake of paradox. During the early 1960s he had it out in Le Monde with the noted Rimbaud scholar Etiemble, who made short shrift of his thesis that Rimbaud's famous poem "Vowels" concealed a set of erotic fantasies on the female body.

Meanwhile, since 1960, according to his own estimate, Faurisson had grown more and more obsessed with a subject far removed from his professional discipline, namely, the extermination camps of the Third Reich. After reading Le Mensonge d'Ulysse ("Ulysses's Lie"), whose author, one Paul Rassinier, had been interned and tortured at Buchenwald, he came to believe, like Rassinier-a former Resistance fighter drummed out of the Socialist Party for having written this book-that the extermination camps were a myth invented by those who emerged from the war victorious. Not until 1980 would Faurisson explain (over Radio Europe 1) how "the so-called gas sing and genocide of Jews are but one and the same historical lie that has made possible a gigantic polit ico-financial swindle whose beneficiaries are the state of Israel and international Zionism, and whose chief victims are the German people-not its leaders-and the Palestinians.

At first, indeed for years, he justified his obsession as a desire to sel the historical record straight. With this noble purpose spurring him on he toured the remains of Auschwitz. Birkenau, Struthof, and Maidanek Rassinier's death in 1967 provided an incentive to continue the labor of historical revision, for his undertaking now became an apostolic imperative. He quizzed historians, he spent long hours at the Center for Contemporary Jewish Documentation in Paris, and accumulated a library of chronicles that failed to give him the "absolute, material proof" he required-what jurists call the probatio diabolica, or impossible proof that Jews were ever herded into gas chambers. As he pored over this material with an eye between the lines, the conviction grew on him that everything written and said about the "final solution" derived from a monstrous conspiracy designed to vilify the Germans and glorify the Jews.

In 1974 he wrote a letter to  $L\epsilon$ Canard Enchaîné, asking its editors whether in their opinion—"your personal opinion on a particularly delicate point of contemporary history"-the gas chambers were "a myth or a reality." If Faurissor wanted exposure, he could not have chosen a better springboard from which to launch himself into the public arena than Le Canard En chaîné. Soon his views were getting bruited about.

In due course they came to the attention of a politically radical group cum publishing house known as La Vieille Taupe, whose adherents had also found in Ulysses's Lie a new window on modern history. Fauris son's research corroborated the the oretical position by which they se store: that totalitarian socialist re gimes and liberal democracies alike had trumped up gas chambers and

extermination camps as a way of naking themselves appear virtuous mobodied by Nazi Germany; that his bogey had served to distract the nasses from the more banal, grayer wil distributed equally among all tates.\* Faurisson, coming from omewhere far beyond Vichy, and a Vieille Taupe, coming from the extreme left, found common ground n what it may not be overly tenlentious to call a paranoid hatred of established authority.

E ARE now in 1978, when La Vieille Taupe reprinted Paul Rassinier's first books, inluding Ulysses's Lie and a voluninous dossier on the theses and ribulations of Robert Faurisson, who became the object of such wrath t the University of Lyons, where he low taught, that the president of the iniversity decided to suspend his ourses for a month until passions ooled. But passions would not cool, nd, indeed, La Vieille Taupe, which vas unable to distribute its books brough commercial channels, had a take in exciting public indignation. his it contrived to do by marshalng support overseas from the Amercan scholar and civil-rights activist Noam Chomsky, who, though he had iot, or claimed that he had not, read 'aurisson's manuscript Mémoire en Défense ("Memory on the Defenive"), wrote for it a prefatory noice in which Faurisson is characterzed as a liberal molested by an lliberal society. With this maneuver a Vieille Taupe increased its presige. Faurisson suddenly sat perched in the shoulders of someone who could not be dismissed out of hand, and drew fire from people angered by the fact that to bring down the pird they now had to raise their ights higher than before. Chomsky vas also angry. "It infuriates me to ind myself at the center of a debate hat really doesn't concern me," he old Nicole Bernheim of Le Monde,

# Corection

That's exactly how it ran on May 15th, 1975, in the Yellville, Arkansas, Mountain Echo.

We're not picking on the Mountain Echo. After all, the mighty Washington Post recently reported

# All Utah Condemned To Face Firing Squad

These two gems are samples from a regular feature of the Columbia Journalism Review called "The Lower case." Reprinting bloopers from the nation's press is fun. It's a part – the lighthearted part – of the job for which the Review was founded twenty years ago: to analyze and criticize the performance of the nation's news media. Consider some of our recent cover stories:

- \* "Citizen Scaife." Millionaire Richard Mellon Scaife bankrolls newsmaking groups whose influence on public opinion would have made Citizen Kane green with envy.
- \* "The Atlanta Story." For the press, the case of the missing and murdered children was full of uncertainties; the biggest, perhaps, was what and what not to print.
- \* "The Bodies Counted are Our Own." A journalist who survived torture Jacobo Timerman asks the press to do more than count the victims.
- \* "When Editors Turn Auditors." The IRS is leaning on the non-profit press and a First Amendment fight is building.

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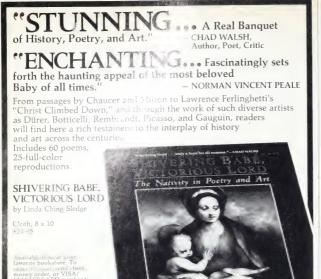
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<sup>\* &</sup>quot;La Vieille Taupe," or "the old mole," s a figure from Marx, who likened the evolution to an old mole undermining apitalist society.





LINDA CHING SLEDGE

#### Solution to the November Puzzle

WM. B. EERDMANS

Notes for "Masterpiece"

Each unclued across entry is a ship (in one case, a "starship"). The unclued down entries identify the master of each.

Across: 1. a-kit-saws, reversed; 5. join(t); 8. mark, two meanings; 10. o-h-i-O, initial letters; 11. to do; 12. (D)opines(S); 15. l-rate; 16. re(Yale+d, reversed; 17. caterer, anagram; 19. therm, hidden; 21. Jesu(ii); 23. cur-b+ark); 24. r-emunerate(anagram); 25. melee, homonym; 26. B-lather; 27. snug, reversal. Down: 1. s(kept)ic-S; 2. antedates, anagram; 3. (tl)rade; 4. a(C)id; 6. incise, homonym; 7. (w)onto(n); 8. mote, anagram; 9. rod(E)o, reversal; 13. perdu, homonym; 14. ar(more)r.-s(tamp); 18. Neme (p)a, reversed; 19. threat, anagram; 20. (dele)gate; 21. ja-ms.; 22. omen, reversal; 23. cub-a.

#### FRENCH AMNESIA

with the zealot's knack for abstract ing the "logic" of his acts from the "irrational" repercussions they have on the human drama-or as if he had been minding his own busines in Cambridge, Massachusetts, when fate picked him up and set him down in Paris, France, under the sign o The Old Mole. Chomsky's contention that the United States has vastly ex aggerated the atrocities committed in Cambodia during Pol Pot's re gime would seem to warrant the conclusion that this innocent asks for what he gets and goes where his elective affinities take him.

By the time Chomsky entered the fray, Faurisson and his mole guard stood surrounded by plaintiffs who wanted them brought to justice either for libel (in the case of Léd Poliakov, whom Faurisson accused of having "manipulated" facts in a book on Auschwitz) or for racial defamation. From early 1980 on, the legal issues were debated so exhaustively in dailies and weeklies that the trial itself, when Faurisson's cases finally came to trial this past June, seemed anticlimactic, especially as it coincided with the elections. When people learned that he had been found guilty on all counts, fined, and given a suspended prison sentence, most greeted the news only with a sense of relief that perhaps they had heard the last of him.

Apart from its criminal ramifications, there is pathos in the story of a man who wanted at all costs to be "right," and thought he couldn't be except by proving everyone else wrong. When a journalist from the newspaper Libération asked him, as he sat in the library of his home at Vichy, "Why this crusade?" Faurisson answered him that it had begun long ago. "I was told that Santa Claus existed and it turned out otherwise: I couldn't bear it," he said. "Then I realized that God didn't exist either. While studying Greek and Latin, I was corrected thousands of times for mistakes in translation, which made an indelible impression on me. I told myself that we have eves to see and ears to hear, but that we nonetheless keep getting things wrong."

HARPER'S/DECEMBER 1981

#### ARS POLITICA



# MUSIC WITHOUT CALCULUS

Donald Tovey's sound advice

by Edmund Morri

USICAL analysis, traditionally one of the driest of prose forms, has reached new extremes of desiccation since Sir Donald Francis Tovey died in 1940. One wonders what that cantankerous genius, whose passion for melody was such that he once started from a dinner table, crying, at the sound of a distant music box, would think of the work of, say, Eric Sams, who seems determined to prove that Schumann wrote calculus.

Tovey could be as cerebral as the next man, as his bar-by-bar précis of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony proves, yet he felt a lifelong, almost religious reverence for sounds that give delight, and hurt not. This reverence was backed by a learning so profound as to intimidate all who came into his presence. Even old Joseph Joachim, an intimate of Brahms and the preeminent violinist of the nineteenth century, had to admit that Tovey, at twenty-two, knew more about music than anybody alive.

He was also—unusually for a musician—erudite in other intellectual fields (graduating from Oxford with classical honors in philosophy and literature in 1898), and the crossfertilization gave a richness to his musical writing far surpassing that of George Bernard Shaw. Who among today's analysts, for example, could draw graceful parallels between Berlioz and Cyrano de Bergerac, or liken a peculiar coupling of bassoons and fourth-string violins in Haydn's

Edmund Morris is the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt. He is at work on a sequel, entitled Theodore Rex. Creation to Tennyson's "moan of doves in immemorial elms"?

Y OWN discovery of Tovey's classic Essays in Musical Analysis in the library of the Prince of Wales School, Nairobi, Kenya, was roughly coincident with my discovery of music itself. Indeed, music was in such short supply (the local airwaves were dominated by farm reports, and marches played by the King's African Rifles) that my first "hearings" of most of the masterpieces of the repertoire were not through my own ears, but Tovey's. Fortunately he had an uncanny gift for describing the indescribable:

... a sudden plunge into extreme darkness. Out of subdued mutterings the first theme again arises and hovers, while the air seems full of whisperings and the beating of mighty wings....

Thus the coda of the first movement of Brahms's B-flat major piano concerto. How I thrilled to that extraordinary sound when, years later, I first got hold of the Backhaus recording! To this day I cannot hear those bass trills without sensing, somewhere overhead, "the beating of mighty wings."

I fell further under the influence of Tovey when, at the age of four-teen, I wrote "home"—home being England, which I had never seen—for his edition of the Beethoven piano sonatas. The dark-red volumes arrived several months later, somewhat the worse for Mombasa mil-

dew, but with all the music and Tovey's thirty-two commentaries intac So closely did I pore over his ever word, in relation to every note, the as I struggled through the sonatas i turn, I began to hallucinate a white haired, pedagogical figure bendin over me.

"A hail-storm," Tovey would suggest, after too many octaves marte lato, "is more sublime than a coashoot." When I quailed before the icy abstractions of the late sonata he encouraged me to persevere: "is no use deferring the study of sucmusic until you feel ripe for it. Remember that experience cannot comexcept by experience."

SUSPECT that Tovey's own un derstanding of Beethoven cam not from experience but from that mysterious spring in whice musical prodigies bathe as infants He was born the son of an Eto: schoolmaster on July 17, 1875, an was composing at the age of eight A formidable female pianist, Sophi Weisse, undertook to train him fo the concert platform, and she becam his mother-substitute, educating his at her private school for girls. Th psychic scars this may have cause can only be guessed at; it is a ma ter of record that Tovey's first man riage was tragically unhappy, an that his mature compositions (which include an opera, a piano concerto and much chamber music) suffere from a certain lack of emotional full

Whether or not his larger gift were cramped, young Tovey flow shed around the turn of the century is pianist, composer, and concertnaster. He was already drawn to he art of musical analysis; some of he collected *Essays* date back as far is 1900, and were written to accompany his own concerts.

London audiences, used to pretty ittle Victorian program-leaflets, with paragraph or two vaguely descripive of musical sense, were intimiated by these gigantic analyseshat of Bach's Goldberg Variations, or example, extending to 24,000 yords, or forty-eight pages of print, lensely packed with musical examles. Even the conscientious few who ried to read them on the spot felt ustifiably frustrated when a symhony came to an end while they vere still pondering Tovey's remarks bout the adagio introduction. What as more, his iconoclastic sarcasms such as the famous crack, apropos f "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage" nd "Harold in Italy," that "no defaite elements of Byron's poem have enetrated the impregnable fortress f Berlioz's encyclopaedic inattenon") had an air of intellectual arogance. It was generally agreed that e was "too clever by half," and the ublic began to stay away from his oncerts in droves.

Tovey's career languished, alrough he continued to appear as pinist with the Joachim Quartet until 914. Then, in his fortieth year, he as appointed Reid Professor of Muca at Edinburgh University, and bund the niche he was to occupy in anquillity the rest of his life.

The "Athens of the North" perectly suited him, and his fame as teacher grew. Swarms of bright oung people clustered around his iano to hear him play and to be orne away like dragonflies on the tream of Toveyesque conversation -brilliant, humorous, and free-flowig, liable at any moment to burst ne bounds of subject and spill over ne whole field of human knowledge. 'he word "genius" appears too often 1 the published reminiscences of nese students for us to doubt its vadity. "It has never been my good ortune to meet anyone," writes the omposer W. B. Wordsworth, "whose and soul seemed so to dwarf all

other views of music as did his."

As professor, Tovey founded the Reid Orchestra (1917) and organized the Reid Symphony Orchestra, which still dignifies Edinburgh's musical life. At the urging of his students he resumed his youthful practice of writing analyses to accompany every program. Despite his repeated pleas that he was an apologist rather than a musicologist ("The duty of the writer of programme notes is that of counsel for the defense"), these witty and scholarly leaflets were circulated to connoisseurs all over the world, and pressure grew for their publication in book form. In 1935, the year of his knighthood, he grumblingly consented to edit them, and the first three volumes of Essays in Musical Analysis, covering symphonies from Haydn through Holst, and concertos from Mozart through Walton, was published by Oxford University Press, Volumes Four and Five (illustrative and vocal music) appeared in 1937, and Volume Six (a series of miscellaneous essays, plus glossary and index) in 1939. Tovey died on July 10, 1940; four years later a final "Supplementary Volume" made available his unpublished writings on chamber music. These seven books, covering more than 250 works, have never been out of print, and comprise, on the whole, the most distinguished body of music criticism in the language. Oxford University Press now publishes them in an attractive paperback edition.

EREADING Tovey's volumes, I am struck by their cumulative impression of youthful ardor. Whether an essav dates from 1900 or 1934, the freshness of Tovey's feelings (so reminiscent of those of Robert Schumann) is the same. Age could not weary his love of music, nor custom stale his response to compositions he must have heard and taught thousands of times. The "counsel for the defense" is at all times there, arguing with flushed face and wig askew on behalf of his clients. He conscientiously addresses us, the open-minded jury, rather than the judge who understands nothing but academic rules and regulations.

Tovey's list of clients is an exclusive one, consisting mainly of Germanic composers of the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. He dutifully represents some of the great twentieth-century names, but his disdain shows. Richard Strauss is criticized for "frequent bursts of prettiness," and the case for Mahler is presented with tongue firmly in cheek. "We do not wish it generally known, but we would all like to write like Mahler if we dared."

Predisposition to Bach and the Viennese classics, however, does not prevent Tovey from recognizing obscure talent; his eloquent piece on Joachim's Hungarian Concerto persuades us it is one of the most important documents in Romantic music. Nor does Tovey reject all composers alien to him-his essays on Berlioz. for example, are among his freshest and funniest. He reserves his contempt for truly meretricious composers like Meyerbeer, who, he notes, once studied with the tubercular Weber: "It is a pity [they] did not exchange their physical constitutions."

Tovey's understanding of pure sound permeates every page of the Essays' prose so thoroughly that the music under discussion keeps surging into one's head. Consider his description of the moment at the end of the slow movement of Beethoven's Emperor concerto when the piano's broken octaves ("a cloud of wavy light") subside: "Nothing is left but a cold grey octave. This sinks a semitone, and becomes glowing." There have been countless attempts to evoke this magical modulation in words, but only Tovey has been able to do so, because his imagination is aural, rather than visual. Instead of seeing two plain breves-B and B-flat-which is all there are in the printed score, he hears them, and in hearing is aware of a mysterious alchemy at work.

Unlike most of his critical brethren, Tovey refuses to take "the coup d'oeil view of music," insisting that a symphony cannot be perceived whole, like a cathedral. Wholeness implies dimensions, but music is independent of dimension: "When the horn sounds in Weber's Oberon see and hear as if space and lime were annihilated." Of course a stain number of minutes or hot the key during any musical performance, but the number varies, whereas the amount of notes does not. It follows, says Tovey, that music can be understood only phrase by phrase, as a series of revelations: the form of a piece is not apparent until it is over, and then, of course, it has no "form" at all.

Nowhere in the Essays is Tovey's mastery of seriatim analysis more brilliantly displayed than in his discussion of the Goldberg Variations. He alarms us at the outset by explaining that the whole vast structure rests on a "base" (his own, entirely apt, pun) of thirty-two rhythmically equal notes, which Bach halves, and halves

again, into sections, subsections, phrases, and clauses. Not only that, every third variation is a canon "arranged in arithmetical order of interval," beginning in unison and rising to the ninth. Tovey then proceeds to show how thirty perfect orchids grow out of this sterile mass of vermiculite, each one more exquisite than the last, until one does not know whom to admire more—Bach, or the man who can teach Bach with such clarity and passion.

OVEY'S major musical arguments (as opposed to his shorter analyses) stand out self-evidently throughout the volume. There are six magnificent studies of Bach's choral music, notably the B Minor Mass, a forty-eight-

page prose picture of Beethoven Ninth, a famous diatribe, "Wagne in the Concert Room," and what i arguably his greatest single contribution to musicology, "The Classic Concerto." This essay demonstrate that the most instrumental of form is actually vocal in origin; indeed, i derives even further afield than it music itself.

Nothing in human life and history is much more thrilling or of more ancient and universal experience than the antithesis of the individual and the crowd; an antithesis which is familiar in every degree, from flat opposition to harmonious reconciliation, and with every contrast and blending of emotion, and which has been of no less universal prominence in works of art than in life. Now the concerto forms express this antithesis with all possible force and delicacy. . . . the classical composers, to whom music was music no matter how profoundly it affected humanity, adapted their art-forms to this condition of the antithesis between one and many, of between greater and

The whole piece is a locus classicu of the art of communicating musica intangibles in tangible prose. It is full of characteristic imagery, and is also the source of Tovey's mot, "a bad cadenza is the very appendiciti of music."

The old professor's final words are contained in a charmingly garrulou: "Retrospective and Corrigenda," appended to Volume Six. In this essay Tovey looks back over his lifelong love affair with music and cheerfully admits that sometimes, in his passion, he has slipped up over minor pedantic points. A typical slip that musicologists still chortle over is his defense as "subtle" of a note in Bach's F-sharp minor Prelude (Book Two of the "Forty-Eight") that does not appear on the original manuscript.

Tovey was inspired, apparently, by a printer's error. But he is serenely unrepentant; the musicologists may make what they like of him. "Peace be to their waste-paper baskets and to mine."

HARPER'S/DECEMBER 1981

#### CASTLE ROCK

by Frederick Morgan

We climbed to the very top that August day while the others waited below and time reached back one hundred years.

The immense stone forming the capital of the cone was bare of soil except in crevices: overhanging by several feet on every side the huge earth mound on which it rested, it had the look of being gravely poised on its own center—a trifle insecure.

Would our small added weight set it tilting?

No matter—we climbed. Insinuating ourselves lithely into fissures and over projecting knobs we worked our way, ascending, around the sides to the upper surface, a breezy platform smooth as a tabletop and open to all four points. Hawks wheeled and screamed from their colonies of nests on one side of our pedestal while down below us little hares were playing in the ashen furze that thatched the earthy mound and antelope grazed, far off, on the gray plains.

I dreamed I was my grandfather recalling the landscape of a lost America—and took your hand. Hours passed. When we descended, the sun, declining, bathed the far brown mountains in a rich amber glow, and deepening shadows shrouded our patient friends..."It's the true end," you whispered musingly—and all was silent as we resumed our memory of the present.



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# THE BLOODY ANGLE

Reagan and the Civil War

by Matthew Stevenso

N DESCRIBING war to the graduating class at West Point last spring, President Reagan seemed to think of it as a romantic education. He quoted General Patton: "Wars may be fought with weapons, but they are won by men." He accepted, "without question," the judgment of President Washington that preparation for war is the most effective means of preserving the peace, and asked again for increases in defense spending. And he described a scene from a story by James Warner Bellah: "A commanding officer lay dying on the field of battle. As he passed the command to a younger officer, he said, 'There may be only one time in your life when your country will call upon you and you will be the only one who can do the nasty job that has to be done. Do it or forever after there will be the taste of ashes in your mouth." Reagan then added: "A torch of leadership is being handed to you in this commencement ceremony,"

Reagan's image of war was not that of the Somme, where it is estimated that more than a million men died; nor was it the winter at Valley Forge or the suffering attendant on the landing on the Normandy beaches; nor that of Hiroshima. Rather, the president conjured up an image of battle like that from a back lot studio in Los Angeles. In such a fantasy, officers die quoting aphorisms on the responsibility of command, and junior officers-perhaps resembling the young Ronald Reagan, who made propaganda films for the army-hurl torches back at Matthew Stevenson is an associate editor of Harper's.

the enemy. War, in this vision, is always worth fighting, and generals are always pithy and bold. The West, starring Gene Autry, will be won in an afternoon.

I would be inclined to dismiss the address at West Point as the usual commencement excess, except that, unfortunately, the president is not the only member of the administration skilled in the art of painting romantic pictures of war. To read the communiqués Alexander Haig issues as he travels, for example, is to get the sense that he is dispatching reports from the front. There was the decision to sell military equipment to the Chinese without so much as a postcard home, as though the offensive depended on American weaponry getting there fast. And the United States agreed to sell Pakistan \$1.6 billion's worth of armaments, even though that country may be further along in its nuclear development than were the Iragis before the Israeli attack. Despite all the talk about cutting taxes and slashing the

budget, saber-rattling seems to be the only adhesive uniting the various elements of Reagan's government and the frequent calls for increasin military spending confirm the government's seriousness about puting the country on a war footing. The almost unavoidable impressione gets, from the posturing. Washington and elsewhere, is the many think war a desirable state the will somehow perform the magic of halting what is perceived to be the nation's moral decline.

is so much easier to project than the actual landscape of battle. It need not be clustered with dying soldiers or inecommanders. Easier to imagine barners waving as they did at Waterloo or jets swooping in as they did to save the Mayaguez, than to recall the wars are often fought for what with hindsight seems no reason at all, an that—it goes without saying—the



involve the senseless slaughter of thousands, even millions, of troops.

For some time now, when traveling, I have made it a point to visit battlefields. In these excursions-to places as different from each other as Salerno and Yorktown-my hope is to begin to compare the specifics of war with the generalizations that emanate so freely from places like West Point and Washington. To see the part of Italy where the Allied troops were needlessly pinned down, to visit the siege lines of Washington or Lafayette, is to obtain some perspective on what is actually being discussed when congressmen go on about "readiness" or editorializers draft philippics on the need for a Rapid Deployment Force. These visits of mine, I suppose, have to do with Lord Salisbury's remark that maps aren't drawn to scale; that no one can look at a chart and see five niles. Likewise, trenches don't show up on the big picture in Washingon. The point is to visualize for oneself the fatuity of politicians or the prayery of soldiers.

EVERAL WEEKS before the president addressed of dets with romantic images, I visited two battlefields of the Civil War-the Wilderness and Spotsylvania Court House. I do not want o draw any undue parallels between Reagan's foreign policy and the last var fought on American soil, but when I heard the president speak vistfully of combat, all I could think of were the two battlefields I had ust visited. These were the sites of pattles fought in the spring of 1864 ifter Ulysses Grant assumed comnand of the Union army, but more han a century later they still seemed o serve as an antidote to any ronantic illusions one might still enertain about war.

The Wilderness is fifteen miles west of Fredericksburg, a little over in hour by car from Washington. The rolling farmland in that part of Virginia is edged by thick forest, but as you approach the Wilderness llong the Orange Turnpike, passing through the crossroads of Chancelorsville, the woods grow thicker,

making it practically a battleforest. Spotsylvania is ten miles southeast of the Wilderness, connected to it by narrow, winding lanes that once, like tributaries of a flooding river, brought together the torrents of two of the largest armies ever to face each other in North America.

In 1864, the Civil War was at a stalemate. President Lincoln faced not only reelection but also the anger of mobs drafted to fight at places like Shiloh. He summoned Grant from the West ("He fights," the president once told one of Grant's detractors) and placed him in command of the Union armies. Grant's strategy, if it can be called that, was straightforward. His objective was not so much Richmond as the destruction of the Confederate army.

In early May, after crossing the Rapidan River, he wrote to General Halleck in Washington: "I propose to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer," But, as William Mc-Feely, the general's excellent biographer, writes: "In May 1864 Ulysses Grant began a vast campaign that was a hideous disaster in every respect save one-it worked. He led his troops into the Wilderness and there produced a nightmare of inhumanity and inept military strategy that ranks with the worst such episodes in the history of warfare." At the Wilderness, at Spotsylvania, at Cold Harbor, and in the sieges before Richmond and Petersburg, he fed men to the guns in what seems like an overture to 1914.

The fighting at the Wilderness lasted two days, May 5 and 6. Union and Confederate soldiers fought practically hand-to-hand. Such was the confusion owing to the terrain that troops often became hopelessly lost in the brambles and wound up killing their own men. Patrols escorting prisoners behind enemy lines sometimes walked in the wrong direction and were themselves captured. At one point Colonel Horace Porter, a staff officer assigned to General Grant, was surprised to come upon a group of men apparently mending their uniforms in the thick of the fight. What they were actually doing was stitching their names to their clothing in hope that word might get back to their families when they were killed.

All that now marks the fight is a hut on the edge of the woods, where relief maps of the battle lines are displayed, and a few picnic tables. But during the five years of the war more men died in a single battle only at Spotsylvania and at Gettysburg. And the Wilderness had its own particular horrors. For example, a fire broke out in the forest, trapping the wounded in a cauldron fed by leaves and branches. Colonel Porter described it as a battle "fought with ear, not eye":

At times the wind howled through the tree-tops, mingling its moans with the groans of the dying, and heavy branches were cut off by the fire of the artillery, and fell crashing upon the heads of the men. adding a new terror to battle. Forest fires raged; ammunitiontrains exploded; the dead were roasted in the conflagration; the wounded, roused by its hot breath, dragged themselves along, with their torn and mangled limbs, in the mad energy of despair, to escape the ravages of the flames; and every bush seemed hung with shreds of blood-stained clothing, It was as though Christian men had turned to fiends, and hell itself had usurped the place of earth.

He estimated that in the twenty-four hours of actual fighting, twenty-five men died every minute.

Faced with casualties of nearly 20,000 men, Grant could have done what his predecessors did and recrossed the Rapidan after the contact with Lee. But Grant feared backtracking almost more than defeat (he once wrote: "I shall take no backward steps. . . . "). His troops also wanted to push forward-toward victory and an end to the fightingand would gauge his leadership on the next move. Had Grant turned left (north) from the Wilderness and gone back across the Rapidan, his men would have seen him as another Meade, Hooker, or Burnside, generals for whom losses were always in vain. But Grant turned right (south) and the surviving troops cheered.

Grant had decided to race Lee south for the vital intersection at

Spotsylvania Court House, to place his army between Lee and Richmond. Had he succeeded, it might have ended the war. But a corps of Confederates arrived there first, driven south by the fire at the Wilderness. Nevertheless, between May 7 and 21, Grant tried to reverse fate and in so doing lost more men than died at the Wilderness.

■ HE FIGHTING at Spotsylvania, which was a series of engagements, was the most desperate of the war, worse than Antietam (which lasted only a day), as bad as anything at Shiloh or Gettysburg. Edwin M. Stanton, secretary of war, wrote later to Oliver Wendell Holmes: "It was the bloodiest swath ever cut through this globe." Spotsylvania was a Federal defeat in every sense-except that it consumed more of Lee's men. After that, with their army reduced to half, the Confederates could only entrench around Richmond and Petersburg while Grant marched south to meet them.

No battlefield I have seen, with the possible exception of Verdun, is a stronger reminder of the tragedy of war than Spotsylvania. The woods are as thick as those at the Wilderness, but there is also a clearing, which the troops called the "mule's shoe," that came to be known as the Bloody Angle. In a macabre way it invites a battle. Trees, like a band of silent spectators, surround the field, which slopes like a dish to the center. On the southern rim is a trench, what remains of the Confederate line. Three hundred vards north is a row of pine trees. From here Grant launched his attacks. There is little to interrupt the eye from one side to the other except some shrubs and dead trees, and even this vegetation evokes a sense of dying, so many generations after the fighting. Altogether it forms an amphitheater, now empty, for a terrible history.

May 12 was the date of the heaviest fighting. The previous day it had rained constantly and there had been only a few skirmishes. At dawn on the 12th, fog and rain covered the ground. Nevertheless, at 4:30 A.M.

Grant ordered members of two corps, about 20,000 men in all, to attack a bulge in the Confederate line. The hope was that if the salient were broken, it might divide Lee's forces. At first, in those gray, soggy hours, the attack succeeded, and Lee's position was threatened. But quickly he realized the stake of the battle—he could not let Grant break his center—and sent reinforcements, which held at the Bloody Angle. Thus the battle evolved into hand-to-hand combatt across the trenches for more than twenty hours.

Wave after wave of Union soldiers charged the trenches. Looking at this line on a summer day, with only flowers exploding in the surrounding woods, it is difficult to comprehend the words of G. N. Galloway, private in the 95th Pennsylvania: "The dead and wounded were torn to pieces by the canister as it swept the ground where they had fallen. The mud was half-way to our knees. ... Our losses were frightful." Nevertheless, the order to charge was given repeatedly, and it can only have been the frenzy of the battle and the unimaginable courage of the troops that moved anyone at all. There was nowhere to go. A Union general said later: "Nothing but the piled-up logs or breastworks separated the combatants. Our men would reach over the logs and fire into the faces of the enemy, would stab over with their bayonets; ... men mounted the works and with muskets rapidly handed them kept up a continuous fire until they were shot down, when others would take their places."

RANT'S WAR was a bit nastier than even the job Bellah had in mind. For good reason was it said that the North shuddered when casualty reports were received from Grant's command. At Spotsylvania and the Wilderness alone, the casualties on both sides were 70,000—the arithmetic by which Grant would win the war—but the fighting lasted almost another year. And on the march from the Rapidan to Appomattox more men were lost than were killed in eight

ther the Korean or Vietnam wars.

In The Red Badge of Coura, Stephen Crane wrote not just of the brutality of the Civil War but of a wars; and he described a charge nunlike those at the Wilderness an Spotsylvania. Such fighting, he wrot possessed "the delirium that encouters despair and death, and is hee less and blind to the odds." B Crane's point was not simply the war is hell. He wanted to dispel fo ever any illusion to the effect the war is somehow a series of Homer confrontations.

Before enlisting, Crane's your soldier thinks of war as some glarious show. Crane writes: "From home his youthful eyes had looke upon the war in his own countrewith distrust. It must be some sort of a play affair... His busy mind hadrawn for him large pictures extravagant in color, lurid with breathles deeds." The boy must pass throug encounters like the ones at Spotsy vania to "rid himself of the red sichness of battle." War was nothin more than the "great death," an nothing less.

The battles at the Wilderness an

Spotsylvania are not something cal dets want to be reminded of o commencement day; nor are they ex amples of the kind of spirit a conmander in chief wants to instill i newly commissioned officers. Bu just as Crane's young soldier is abl to return from "a land of strange squalling upheavals" and finally se war for what it is, so too might th battlefields so near to Washingto act as an antidote to the resurgen idea that war is the heroic struggl of myth. The speeches and ominou bluster of Reagan and his adviser strike me as not unlike the dream of the young soldier, fantasies about marches, sieges, and conflicts. Bu better for the ministers of our gov ernment to lose their illusions a the Bloody Angle, or in the wood at the Wilderness, than to discove their fallacy when they lead the na tion into one of those battles in tended for publicity agents-such a

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the Gulf of Sidra-but which, fol

whatever reason, ends as did the

Somme.

Continued from page 36) foreign rises and disastrous forecasts of heir outcomes, as in Cuba, in Egypt, n Iran.

American impatience may also be ttributed to another singularity: lost Americans believe (or seem to elieve) that all achievements must e reached, and possibly enjoyed, vithin a man's lifetime. Life being short voyage in the light between wo interminable darknesses, the past nd the future do not really count. Vhat counts is the contemporary eneration. A man must do what he as to do before he dies. This is not o in Europe, or at least was not so the past. Each man in the Old Vorld knew that he was merely a nk in a chain between ancestors nd descendants: If a man didn't take it, his sons or grandsons might. Vith the gentle decay of the family ais is no longer as true in Europe s it used to be. Yet it remains the revalent attitude, and one of the reaons why Europeans are struck and uzzled by Americans' alacrity and ne eagerness with which they somemes plunge much too soon into alf-baked, untried but invariably ecessary, generous, and noble projcts; the impatience with which they ush unprepared nations into politcal experiments, often slowing down r stopping the very progress they ant to promote: agrarian reforms, lliances with left-wing parties, overight democratization. The record is ong, from the foundation of the Sun at-sen republic in China, which was ollowed by almost half a century of ivil and foreign wars, to the encourgement of the center-left coalition 1 Italy, which put an end to the economic miracle," and to the illmed pursuit of human rights in

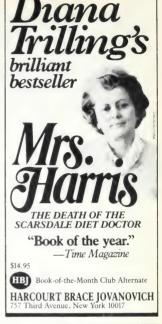
The urge to meddle

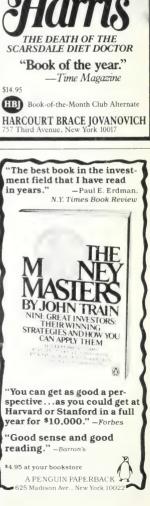
NE OTHER perennial contradiction has always perplexed and often deceived Europeans. It now makes them xtremely wary. Is the United States fundamentally interventionist or a teterminedly isolationist country? It is evidently important to know the

answer in order to avoid grievous mistakes. When the Hungarians revolted in 1956, and the Czechs tried to in 1968, they felt sure of being helped by an American gesture, a demonstration of solidarity that would intimidate the Soviets. But the Americans were not in an interventionist mood at the time. All they had contributed were the stirring speeches on Radio Free Europe over the previous years. When the French and the British tried to wrest the Suez Canal, which had been their property, from the Egyptians, who had taken it over, they were stopped in their tracks by a few sharp words from John Foster Dulles, the secretary of state. They, too, had misinterpreted the American mood.

The truth, of course, is that the United States is both isolationist and interventionist, but one never knows which and when. Like other countries, it would really prefer to be a vast Switzerland, to keep itself free from foreign entanglements and enjoy, undisturbed, the pleasurable advantages of its own way of life, while sedulously perfecting it; in the words of Theodore Roosevelt, who deplored it vigorously, pursuing "the soft and easy enjoyment of material comforts." That is, unfortunately, not always possible. In order to enjoy peace, one must be sure that one's neighbors in the world condominium behave decently. At times, of course, they don't. Some cling lovingly to obsolete barbaric ways, to unsanitary living conditions, to faulty diets, to anthropophagy, to wasteful techniques of production, to ancient superstitions, miseries, injustices, and decrepit political ideas, ruinous to themselves and to their neighbors. Some play with outlandish and explosive new political theories. There is a point at which the Americans' impatience, plus their irresistible philanthropic instinct, their sense of mission, their pragmatism, their love of order, logic, and peace, force them to intervene.

Some of these interventions provoked a number of miniwars, which left behind a legacy of ruinous political consequences, memories of hatred and hostility, and the ardent desire for revenge, mostly in Central





America: but some were successful. The textbook examples are the chastising, reconstruction, and ultimate Americanization of Germany and Japan, countries that were such good pupils that they soon surpassed their teacher. To be sure, the possibilities of armed intervention for therapeutic and educational purposes have diminished in the contemporary world -for the time being, anyway. But the urge is always present. In 1979, at the time of a devastating increase in oil prices, Harvard professor Theodore Levitt published, aptly on July 4. these words in The New York Times (a cri du coeur, an echo from the past):

Swift decisive military action to control the supply and price of Persian Gulf oil is technically feasible. The fact that oil is "owned" by others is beside the point.... OPEC has declared illegitimate war upon a world that, armed to the teeth, wrings its hands while its economies slip uncertainly to the brink of disaster....Preventive action, discredited in Vietnam, is justified now because the silent rules of civility that bind the world have been broken .... The United States has been the most charitable of nations....To be charitable does not require one to be a sap, soft to the point of self-immolation. Charity today would be to halt, by whatever means, OPEC's open piracy against the world.

MERICAN interventionists, like the one above, are often nothing more than impatient isolationists. The difficulty of determining, with any degree of accuracy, the tack on which the United States is sailing at a given moment and the tack it might be sailing on in the immediate future (intervention or isolation, concern or indifference, euphoria or panic, moralism or pragmatism), is aggravated by some uniquely American features, of which only a few foreign specialists are aware. One is the process for the selection of a new president and the transfer of powers from his predecessor. In most European parliamentary democracies, the head of the government is the prime min-

ister, responsible for all political decisions. When he errs he can easily be overthrown in a few hours, without trauma, by a vote of Parliament. All prime ministers are veteran parliamentarians. They have been marinated for decades in national and international politics, are well acquainted with all their political colleagues and rivals (they have grown old together), know all current problems intimately, and could answer questions about them in their sleep. They also have a thorough knowledge of the bureaucratic organization, its possibilities and limits. When they are installed in their new offices, they find themselves surrounded by complete up-to-date files and by a staff of permanent officials and ex-

Some of America's newly elected presidents, of course, have also been in Congress and know the problems. But many come from peripheral posts. They have had little contact with the federal government and know little more about national or international affairs than what they read in newspapers and in their "dossiers," and what a few experts have told them. Even most vice presidents who get the job at the death of the president are kept from the knowledge of public affairs (Truman knew nothing of the atomic-bomb project when Roosevelt died). The day the new president is installed in his bare new office he finds no permanent staff and no files. His predecessor's documents were once considered his private property, to be disposed of at his pleasure; some embarrassing ones were burned; the rest were usually deposited in a provincial library for the use of future friendly historians. When the new president presses a bell button that first morning in his Oval Office in an empty White House, only the butler answers.

Each new president must then install his own collaborators, as eager, but usually as ill informed and often as inexperienced, as he, in the office space available, and give them tasks and titles invented each time from scratch. It takes some of them weeks to know what to do and how to do it. Even the scholarly experts

recruited from the universities mus learn the difference between problems seen at a distance in academitranquillity and the contradictorconfusion of daily business.

If a president should show himselinept, err, suffer a stroke, go maddrag the country to catastrophe, o get involved with a dubious an inept gang of secret agents, there i only one constitutional way to gerid of him before his term expires one so appalling that it has nevebeen successful. A simple majority vote in Parliament is not enough.

It is not surprising that the election and education of new president could paralyze American initiative for months, and that nobody can really guess which way the ship of state will veer next. It is no wonder that Europeans, seeing the supreme executive authority fade for months on end, and the political line mean der uncertainly, are sometimes terrified.

#### When America speaks . .

NOTHER SERIOUS cause for European apprehension and despondency is the immense size, cornucopia fertility and voraciousness of the United States. It is not surprising that momentous decisions (or nondecisions) of such a great nation should provoke world-shaking consequences. It is disturbing but understandable that an official statement, a confidential leak, a few words spoken or omitted (intentionally or absentmindedly), whether by a high American official, the president himself, the secretary of state, or an "unnamed source," may settle a dispute in a distant place or embitter it, turn an election one way or another, disrupt or placate public order, spark or discourage military coups d'état or bloody popular revolts. Occasionally, the United States has unwittingly helped topple or consolidate an unsavory dictator or sovereign, brought to power a gang of inexperienced fanatics, provoked the random execution of scores of rebels, previous rulers, or simple bystanders, as well as the murder of an occasional American ambassador, It

ras enough, years ago, for a secreiry of state to appear to have said at the United States might not deind South Korea, to start a bloody, xpensive, and drawn-out war.

Lesser events in America—the abentminded directive of one multiational, flurries in the exchange, the
se and fall of the discount rate, a
rought, a flood, labor unrest, a recrd or poor harvest, the adoption of
new ersatz, a technological breaknrough, a teenager's rage, a new
ealth fad, a whim, or an advertisig campaign—can also send rings
f concentric waves to the most reiote corners of the world, and, in
me, swerve the course of history.

Take the case of mahogany. It was or a very long time the symbol of ourgeois affluence and good taste. 7hen it suddenly went out of fashin in the United States, sixty or eventy years ago, prosperous and able tropical countries, which lived rainly on the export of that wood, ere ruined almost overnight. Their vers were blocked by masses of otting trunks. The starving people oted. The streets were strewn with orpses. Dictators took power. Forign embassies bulged with political sfugees. What would happen to all opical countries the day American octors decree (as they may) that ananas are carcinogenic?

Or take the miraculous overnight evelopment, a few years ago, of a w modest European mineral-water rms, the moment Americans enthuastically started drinking healthy. nported waters at cocktail time intead of their usual liver-corroding quors. Or take the case of wines. amous old vineyards and firms can o into decline, and hitherto unnown ones unexpectedly flourish, ne moment drinkers in the United tates shift their preferences en vasse. Orvieto, long a favorite of imericans, had to abandon the prouction of its century-old famous weet abboccato to produce a much ess distinguished dry wine. Chamagne, too, turned from sweet to dry t the turn of the century, when the imerican taste, or, as some labels till state today, the goût américain, hanged.

Let's imagine enough Americans

one day acquire a craving for zabaglione, a popular Italian dessert made of beaten eggs, sugar, and Marsala. This is not an absurd hypothesis; the concoction is tasty and is believed to reinvigorate and multiply a man's capacity and zest for love. As a result, miserable Sicily. where Marsala comes from, would once again become an opulent island; the local Mafia would turn from Italian politics and drugs to international control of the wine; the Spanish, the Portuguese, and the Greeks would spend millions pushing their own substitutes: Japanese chemists would find a way to make better and cheaper synthetic Marsala from whale blubber: the Soviet Union would surreptitiously surround the island with their fleet: the Arabs. make military preparations to conquer irredentist Sicily, Sicilia irredenta, once again . . .

One source of profound anxiety for Europeans is the oscillating value of the dollar. The dollar is now the main currency of the world marketplace. All attempts at finding substitutes have failed. But, unlike wampum, glass beads, sesterces, the drachma, doubloon, zecchino, thaler, louis, napoleon, sovereign, and eagle in their days, or the plastic multicolored rounds or squares at Las Vegas and Monte Carlo, its value may change unexpectedly within hours inside a man's pocket, in the underground vaults or the ledgers of a bank. What is frightening about this phenomenon is that the reasons for the fluctuations are often provincial American reasons, usually incomprehensible to foreigners: the state of the American balance of payments, a political maneuver dictated by domestic needs, the testing of a newfangled economic theory, or decisions or nondecisions by the monetary authorities in Washington, Over none of these factors do Europeans (as well as all other non-Americans) have any influence, let alone control.

What adds to the Europeans' dismay is that Americans seem not always to be fully aware of their country's size, strength, and influence. The consequences of some of their moves are, in fact, sometimes as surprising and shocking to them as to

the rest of the world. At times the United States still behaves as the small, peace-loving, homespun, philosophical republic it used to be, a country that could afford to propose or proclaim any desirable, noble, or crackpot idea, because nobody would take it very seriously and nothing would happen. At other times, overconscious of its weight and responsibility, it tries to impose solutions on the world, sometimes with no results but often with detrimental ones.

It could also be said of other great nations, of course, both in the past and the present, that they occasionally miscalculated the effects of their actions. Imperial Russia, imperial Germany, and Austria-Hungary did in August 1914, for instance. But few other nations in history were ever as powerful and capable of influencing events as those three were in 1914 and as the United States is today. Minor countries—and the United States in decades past—could afford to make mistakes. It does not have that luxury today.

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# PUZZLE

#### BATTLESHIPS

by E. R. Galli and Richard Maltby, Jr. (With acknowledgments to Anticos of The Listener)

#### This month's instructions:

The two letters preceding each clue represent the coordinates in the grid where a "hit" is made on that answer in the diagram. The solver must determine the complete position, horizontal or vertical. Clue answers beginning with the letters F, J, Q, V, and Y are not to be entered. They represent ships of 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 black squares in length, respectively. Their exact disposition must likewise be determined; they provide the diagram's pattern. No two "ships" touch, even at their corners; none are entered diagonally. There are five onesquare ships, four two-square ships, three three-square ships, two four-square ships, and one five-square ship.

Clue answers include four proper names. AS, CW, EN, and JW are, unfortunately, four of those words usually found only in crossword puzzles. Clues, though having a nautical flavor, are normal . . . cryptic, but normal. As always, mental repunctuation of a clue is the key to its solution.

The answer to last month's puzzle appears on page 74.

#### CLUES

AN Female, alert, cast again for flounder (6) AO Cat half-coughs on needlefish (6) AP Chinese ship set off for trips (7) AS Fish . . . it's essential to drop a hook (4) AU Sailor and I desert (4) AV Navy duty is nothing (6) BQ Fish on the move and work baggage (7) BT French racing crew's cargo (7) BW One of the crew's alternative in the Sound (3) CM Libertine rower due to lose heart (4) CO Pacific is quite stormy (5) CT Disorderly crew upset saloon and left in a hurry, almost CW Allowance for damage from ends on trawling net (4) CX Straits churn up near a squid (10) DM Nautical galley stocks seaweed (4) DP Discover nucleus of nuclear navy (5) DT Sparing two-thirds of the split yard (7) DV Part of the game swallowed by lethal fish (4) EM What crafts returned first for boater (5, 3) EN Use nothing for contest on water (5) EP Where one hears show on a ship (4) ES Water channel left in smoke (5 EV British crew dun a vet rudely (7) FT Gulls showing brass, breaking owl eggs (12) FV Cream for the hands-diving bird eats it up (6) GN He enthusiastically admires sailor during first half of

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- GT Sailing ship and long time piracy (10)
- GU It's not briny forward (6)
- GW Fleets still loaf when at sea (9)
- HO Sonar could reveal a crime (5) HP Ships for prostitutes (6)
- HR Bad storm covers Navy university (12)
- HU Muddy sea bottom . . . don't start liquor (4)
- HV He observes a lot of weight capsized the Queen (5)
- HX Quick-footed one gets out of blowing water (4)
- IN Dummy tug (4)
- IQ Turn up most of the navigational hazard in the soup ( IR Lick fish with head cut off (4)
- IS Show boredom and swerve off course north (4)
- IW Piece of lace and tanker's cargo exchanged for gold dory (5)
- JN French island retreats for old Israelite priest (3)
- JO Fancy gentleman drowned in Scottish river (6)
- JT How two Russian brothers end up in sea (4)
- JW Small eel disrupted revel (5)
- KM Junior embraces auntie and Flipper? (8)
- KO He's beaten sole in a stew, right (5)
- KU This, Sis, could be the start for actor in Anchors Awei
- KX Clam could make home halfway in bog (6)
- LP Missouri is tilted at the bow, having taken on a lit water! (5)
- LT Deep in tangled nets, whale's tail (7)
- LV These words don't come easy in talk with WAVES (1

#### voyage (6) CONTEST RULES

Send completed diagram with name and address to Battleships. Harper's Magazine, Two Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Entries must be received by December 8. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened will receive a one-year subscription to

Harper's. The solution will be printed in the January issue. Wir ners' names will be printed in the February issue. Winners of the October puzzle, "Diametricode," are M. Declan Kolb, Champaig Illinois; Ruth Richardson, Akron, Ohio; and John Willis, Quebe Canada.



